

FAMILY DEVOTIONS
FOR
SUNDAY-EVENINGS,

Throughout the YEAR.

BEING

Practical Discourses,

WITH

Suitable Prayers.

Volume IV.

By *Theophilus Dorrington.*

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Family Devotion

for

Young People

Through the Year

Line

Family Devotion



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THE
RESURRECTION
OF OUR
Blessed Saviour,
Proved and Applied.

Let us Pray.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

2 Tim. 2. 8.

Remember, that Jesus Christ of the Seed of David, was raised from the Dead according to my Gospel.

IT is, without doubt, a matter of very great Importance, to the Confirmation of the whole Doctrine of Christianity, that the World should be convinced of the Resurrection of Jesus from the Dead. This indeed was that which was design'd and was

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was very fit to take off the Scandal and Offence of the Cross, and to recommend Him to Men as a Mighty Saviour who had himself died under the hands of his Enemies.

This was very fit to convince the Unbelieving Jews, that he was the True Messiah notwithstanding his Death: They had learnt from the Sacred Writings, which they had, that the Messiah was to endure for ever; and by this they might see that he intended to do so: They had said to him as he hung on the Cross, that if he could save himself, and come down from thence they would believe on him; But this was a greater thing to save himself from the Grave on the Third Day after he had been dead and buried, then to have come down from the the Cross while he was yet alive.

The insisting upon this among the Gentiles too was very necessary, and very proper, to recommend Jesus Chirst and his Salvation to them. For they had learnt by Tradition from the Fathers of the World, who had been taught this by Divine Inspiration, That Mankind should be mightily behoden to some Divine and Excellent Person, who should dwell for a time on Earth and do abundance of Good there; and should after his Death be translated to Heaven, and remain there an Advocate and Protector to them. This Noti-
on generally possest the Heathen World; and from hence we may believe it was that they so easily and unanimously fell into their Demon Worship. All Nations had their Demons whom they Worshiped: Who were such as, they

they supposed, had been some time Men and Women on Earth, and had been great Benefactors to their Nation: And whom they also supposed to have been at their Death Translated into Heaven, and to retain still the Kindness which they had for the Nation they had belonged to; and to have an Interest with the Supream Deity which they made use of to help and favour them. From hence it was, that when St. Paul at *Athens* Preach'd to them of *Jesus* and his Resurrection; the wiser and more Learned among them apprehended him to speak of Things somewhat agreeable to the Divinity which they had long been possest with; and to them *He seem'd*, 'tis said, *to be a fitter forth of strange Gods*. That is to have told them of a New Demon or Deified Man, whom they had not heard of before: They had indeed corrupted their Notion of a Mediatour with these two Errors, which were great hindrances of their receiving *Jesus Christ*; One was, that as they had multiplied the Superior Gods, so they had multiplied also the Mediators between God and Men; whereas Truth tells us, *There is but One God, and One Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus*. Another was, That they supposed these Demons or Mediators to be but National Deities, or favourers of some particular Nations alone; whereas, the true Mediator is an Universal one, and favours all Mankind. And we may observe, that this part of the Corruption of the Doctrine of a Mediator the Jews themselves were fallen in-

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to; who thought, that the Messiah when he should come would be a Friend and Favourer of their Nation alone.

Thus we see the Importance of Convincing the World of the Resurrection of Jesus: And we may justly believe this was the great reason, why Jesus himself staid so long on Earth after his Resurrection before he Ascended to Heaven; why he so often appear'd to his Disciples in that time, and set Himself to convince them, by so many ways of the truth of this whom he had chosen to be the Witnesses of it to the World. Upon this Account also it was, that the Apostles so often insisted upon this in their Preachings both to Jews and Gentiles: And for this reason did St. Paul give *Timothy*, who was at this time Bishop of the Church of *Ephesus*, the Charge in our Text, to *Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the Dead according to the Gospel.*

The word which we Translate, *Remember*, signifies also to commemorate or make mention of a Thing; and may be understood to require, that *Timothy* should put others in Mind of this, as well as remember it himself. Especially we may suppose it to have that Latitude of Significancy here; because we find the Apostle saying again to him in the 14th. Verse after he had joyn'd some other Articles of Faith with this, *Of these things put them in remembrance.* And it is very probable from the first Accounts of the Christian Church, that the Apostles themselves did begin, and Establish this Festival for the yearly Commemoration

tion of the Resurrection of Jesus: For we find the Observation of it mention'd and insisted on by those early Bishops who liv'd and convers'd with the Apostles. And they might with great reason Establish a particular set time whereon to make a solemn Commemoration of this, least, as is usual in such Cases, it might come pass, that if a particular time had not been fixed for the doing this, no time would have been found to do it on: Besides, the particular and solemn Remembrance of this at one time, was known to be of use to make such an Impression upon the Minds of Men, as would make them remember it, and give it influence at other times. Let us, then, in compliance with the Apostles Charge in the Text, and with the Primitive Practice of the Church, and with our own Churches suitable Rule and Command call to mind and make mention of this, *That Jesus Christ of the Seed of David, was raised from the Dead according to what the Gospel teaches us of this.* Let us now seriously consider what we are taught concerning it; meditate upon the proofs and assurances which we have of it; and improve these things to the promoting of a Good Life and Practice.

I shall as briefly as I can insist upon these following Heads of Discourse concerning it.

1. To shew that the Messiah or Christ was to rise again very soon from the Dead according to the Prophesies concerning him in the Old Testament.

2. To prove that Jesus did indeed rise again from the Dead.

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3. To give such an Account as the Holy Scripture affords us, of the Reason and Ends of this his Rising again.

4. *Lastly*, I shall improve this Point to the urging a Good and Religious Life.

In the First place, I think fit to shew, That the Christ or Messiah promised to the Jews was to rise again from the Dead, and that soon after he should die, according to the Prophesies concerning him in the Old Testament. For the Apostle in calling Jesus the Christ in our Text, intimates that the things Prophesied of the Christ are fulfill'd in Jesus, and so gives us Occasion to enquire whether or no this be one of them: And besides, this is that which the Gospel of St. Paul asserts concerning the Resurrection of Jesus, That it was according to the *Scriptures*, as we may see, *1 Cor. 15. 4.*

First, Then, we may account this foretold in all those Places which speak of the Messiah as enduring for ever: As 'tis said in the 110th. *Psalm*, he should be *A Priest for ever, after the Order of Melchizedek*: and in *Dan. 2. 44.* and *7. 14.* His Kingdom is spoken of, as that which should *Endure for ever*. But since the Prophets do also plainly foretel his dying: And this Prophet in particular expressly says, the Messiah should *be cut off*, *Dan. 9. 26.* It must needs be, that when they speak of his Enduring for ever, they must mean he should rise again to do so. The Jews themselves appear to have expected, that the Christ should endure for ever in *John 12. 34.* And for this reason they

they thought our Saviour contradicted his pretences to be the true Christ when he spake of Dying, because they did not understand, that he would soon rise again from the Dead.

Again we may reckon this evidently foretold in *Psal. 16. 10.* in these words of the Psalmist there, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell, nor suffer thine Holy one to see Corruption.* In which words he speaks that which was not fulfill'd in him, and therefore was not in the full meaning of it to be limited to him. The Prophet indeed speaks of himself here, and mentions his hope, that God would at length deliver him from the great distresses which he was now under, and would not suffer him utterly to perish under them: But he was carried by the Spirit of Prophecy to express this in terms which signify more than would be true of himself in Person; even a Resurrection from Death it self, and that so speedy an one, as that the Body should not putrefie. But as for *David*, he died and was laid to his Fathers, or Buried, and saw Corruption, as the Apostle speaks, *Acts 13. 36.* This must be therefore a Prophecy of the Messiah, who was to come of *David's* Race, and to be fulfill'd in Him: And this Interpretation we may find the Apostle *Peter* puts upon this place in *Act. 2.* and St. *Paul* in that foremention'd 13th. Chapter, who both say this Scripture was fulfill'd in Jesus, as it did intend the Messiah, in that Jesus rose again from the Dead on the Third Day, which was so soon as that he did not see Corruption.

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I shall produce but one place more to this purpose, and that is *Isa. 53. 10.* The Prophet is understood by the Jews themselves, to have Prophesied of the Messiah in this Chapter. Now he plainly says here, that he should be cut off out of the Land of the Living ; and should *make his Soul or Life an Offering of Sin*, meaning in his Death ; and yet he adds in the Tenth Verse, That *He should see his Seed and prolong his days, and the Pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand.* But how could he see his seed after his Death, the Spiritual Offspring that should be new born by the Power of his Word and Sacraments ? Or how could he be said to prolong his days, but by soon rising again from the Dead ? And in saying the Pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, the Prophet plainly foretells, that the Redemption of Mankind would be committed to him, that he would have something to do towards promoting it after his Death ; and therefore plainly intimates, that for the doing of that, he must needs rise again quickly from the Dead. Thus we may see 'tis sufficiently evident in the Prophesies concerning the Messiah, that he should soon rise again from the Death which he was to fall under.

The next thing I propos'd to do, is to prove, That Jesus did rise again from the Dead : And as it is a matter of great importance to us, that this be true, since all our Joy and Comfort, and all our hopes depend upon it, so, thanks be to God , we have abundant evidence and confirmation of the Truth of it.

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The time will not allow me to produce all the proof of this that I might: It shall therefore suffice to mention enough to satisfie us. And I shall insist a little upon these Three Substantial Arguments.

1. His Disciples and Followers had sufficient Evidence and Assurance of this, if they had all that which they declare they had.

2. There is a great deal of Reason to believe, That they were themselves fully convinced of this, and so were sincere in the Declarations which they made concerning their Evidences of it.

3. God himself was pleased most remarkably to own and confirm their Testimony, in the many Miracles which he enabled them to Work.

In the First place let us consider, That his Disciples and Followers had sufficient Evidence and Assurance, That Jesus rose again from the Dead on the Third Day; if they indeed had all that which they declare they had:

For they tell us. That on the First Day of their Week, which was the Third Day after Jesus had been Dead and Buried, early in the Morning, those who were set to watch the Sepulchre of Jesus, under pretence that his Disciples might not steal him away, were put into a terrible fright by an Earthquake which they felt in the place; and by the glorious appearance of an Angel descending from Heaven, who roll'd away the weighty Stone from the Mouth of the Sepulchre, and sat upon it:

These

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These Circumstances the Disciples knew from the Confession of these Men , and so we may reckon they had the Testimony of Enemies to the Resurrection of Jesus.

Besides this, some of the Disciples coming that Morning to the Sepulchre saw it was open ; they look'd in and saw the Linnen Cloaths lie there in which he had been Buried , and the Napkin by it self , which had been about his Head ; which were a certain sign , that he had not been carried away dead ; for they who had done that , would not have staid to strip him of his Grave Cloaths there. And some Devout Women staying about the Sepulchre saw some Angels there , who told them Jesus was not there but was Risen ; and mildly rebuk'd them , for seeking the Living in a place prepar'd only for the Dead to abide in : And thus they had the Testimony of Angels also to this matter.

Yet further ; They say that after these things they saw him ; They handled and felt on him ; They convers'd with him often ; They saw him eat and drink before them ; That he appear'd to them by Night , and by Day : That he appear'd to them not only singly but in Company ; He walk'd with two of them as they were going to *Emmaus* , and discours'd with them for many Hours together : Yea , he was once seen of Five Hundred of them together. They tell us that he staid Forty Days among them ; and many times appear'd instructing them in things relating to the Propagating of his Gospel ; And that

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that at last he went with a good Number of them as far as from Jerusalem to Bethany; and there in their sight Ascended into Heaven. Thus they had also sufficiently the Testimony of their senses to this Matter.

Lastly, They tell us, That when they Assembled at the next time of Pentecost; As they were Praying the House was shaken; and there was a sudden sound as of a mighty Wind, and immediately there appear'd over the Heads of the Apostles, the shape of Cloven Tongues in a Flame; upon which they were Inspired immediately, and inable to utter their Inspirations in Languages, which before that minute they had never learnt nor understood: And this they Ascrib'd to Jesus as what he had promised he would send upon his Ascension into Heaven; and they look'd upon it, and spake of it as a proof of his Resurrection from the Dead, and Ascension thither. St. Peter speaks thus of this thing to the wondering Multitudes, *Acts 2. 32, 33.* *This Jesus* (saith he) *hath God raised up whereof we are all Witnesses:* *Therefore he, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having receiv'd of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* And thus we may also account, that they Declare they had the Testimony of the Holy Ghost himself to the Truth of the Resurrection of Jesus.

It may not be amiss to take notice here of the Objection of *Celsus* against this Truth: Why (said that Infidel) did not Jesus, if He rose again, shew himself to others besides

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sides his Disciples? By which he would intimate, that the matter is very suspicious upon this account; because none but protest Disciples and Followers of Jesus did declare his Resurrection. But it cannot be strange, that none but such should declare this if it were true; because we may very reasonably suppose, that if Jesus did appear to any that had not been his Disciples before, he might thereby convince them, and make them become his Disciples now; and therefore also Witnesses of the Truth of his Resurrection. I say, we may well suppose this, because we have one remarkable Instance of it: He did appear to a fierce and bitter Enemy of this Truth, and a most industrious Persecutor of the Witnesses of it; and thereby turn'd him to be a Disciple, and a Zealous Witness of it himself. *Last of all he was seen of me also (says St. Paul) as of one born out of due time, 1 Cor. 15. 8.* He adds the last Words, because of his late Conversion.

These are the things said by the Followers of Jesus, and those who took upon them to be Witnesses of his Resurrection:

In the Second place, If we consider the matter we shall see, there is abundant Reason to believe they were themselves fully convinced of the Truth of this; and so were sincere in the Declarations which they made concerning their Evidences of it. For they confess, that some of themselves had been at first very backward, and loth to believe this: That Jesus had Occasion to upbraid and blame them for their Unbelief. And

And what other account can be given of their Boldness and Courage, in owning him after he was crucified and dead, who appear'd all so full of fear, at the apprehending of Jesus, as to fly and leave him alone in the hands of his Enemies. The timerous *Peter*, who had disown'd him with an Oath, at the challenge of a Maid-servant, tells the Rulers of the Jews to their Faces, That *God had rais'd him up, whom they had crucified*, *Acts 4. 10.*

What could make them so industrious to propagate the belief of this, if they had not believ'd it themselves? If there be a pleasure in imposing upon the World, 'tis certainly a very ill natur'd one: But how could they imagin they should ever be able to make the World believe so strange a thing? That they should possess the Jews, God had raised him from the Dead, whom they had hanged on a Cross till he died, and challenged him if he could, to save himself from thence? Or, that they should ever be able to make the Gentiles believe on him, whom the People of his own Nation had rejected and despised, and deliver'd him up to the vilest and most ignominious Death? They could not, with any reason, hope to succeed in this undertaking, unless they had the encouragement of being asur'd of his Resurrection; which might give them ground to expect, that as he had power to rise from the dead, so he was able to give them success in declaring this.

But if they could be so vain and wild, as to believe at first, that they might be able to possess

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sets the World with this, tho' they knew it to be a falsehood ; yet it is not to be imagin'd they would have persisted in this endeavour, when they found the World loth to believe it ; and found themselves eagerly persecuted by them who had put Jesus to death : When one of the Apostles (St. James) was soon after him put to death for testifying this ; when they saw St. Stephen furiously ston'd by the Jews for it, St. Peter imprison'd and design'd also for the slaughter ; and others shamefully beaten and scourged for declaring it. These things must needs have made them desist, if they had not believ'd what they said.

It is not to be imagin'd, but they believ'd this themselves, when they did so zealously and industriously propagate the belief of it ; amidst *Stripes above measure*, (as St. Paul speaks, 2 Cor. 11. 23, &c.) with frequent *Imprisonments*, in *Perils of Waters*, in *Perils of Robbers*, in *Perils from Jews*, in *Perils from the Heathens*, in *weariness and painfulness*, in *watchings often*, in *hunger and thirst*, in *cold and nakedness*. Certainly we may believe these Men would have lov'd their safety and ease and prosperity in the World, as much as other Men find themselves to do ; if they had not thought themselves oblig'd to abandon these, that they might perform this their Duty : And if they had not upon the ground of this Resurrection, expected to be made partakers of better things than this World can afford ; and hoped for a glorious Reward of these their Labours and Sufferings : Which things speak them fully

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convined of the Truth of what they deliver'd, and sincere in the Declarations they made of it.

Yet, in the third place, we may also consider, that God himself was pleased most remarkably to own and confirm their Testimony in the many Miracles which he inabled them to work. *For many Wonders and Signs were done by the Apostles*, we are told, *Act 2. 43.* And the Evangelist says, *The Lord was working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following*, *Mark 16. 20.* These things were certainly the Works of the Lord, and were the unquestionable Testimony of God himself, to the Message which they brought. These Miracles were wrought among the People: (*Act 5. 12.*) Not done in secret, but openly; not only before a few, but before multitudes; not only in the sight of a select number of friends, but so as that even enemies were forced to acknowledge the matters of fact, (*Act 4.16.*) They did not seek darkness for their Miracles, which gives advantage for trick and juggle, but did them in the open day-light. It was great credit to their Miracles, that they constantly appear'd to decline, that the honor of them should be given to themselves, and to give it wholly in Jesus Christ, (as in *Act 3. 12.* and elsewhere.) It was great credit to their Miracles, that they pretended to confirm by them no other Doctrins than what were agreeable to the Law and the Prophets; nor any matters of fact concerning the Messiah, but what had been foretold in them. If they had advanced any thing

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contrary to what had been recommended and confirm'd by undoubted Miracles before, they might justly have been rejected as Impostors by the direction of the Jewish Law. It was great credit to their Miracles, that they prevail'd over the tricks of Magick, and over the Persons themselves who used that guilty and diabolical Art. *Simon Magus*, by his conjuring tricks, had so far deluded the Citizens of *Samaria*, that they believ'd him to be the great Power of God ; but when *Philip* came amongst them to preach the Gospel, he was so far outdone, that the People left off admiring him, and attended to *Philip* ; insomuch, that *Simon* himself became a pretended Profelyte to the Christian Religion, and was baptized, (*Acts* 8.) Again, We find St. *Paul* encountering another Sorcerer in *Cypru*, and, being justly provok'd, by his opposition to the Gospel, he threatens him from God with immediate Blindness, which fell upon him in the very instant, (*Acts* 13. 11.) Yea, so far did their Doctrin and Miracles prevail against these Delusions of the Devil, that many, who had been Practitioners of this guilty Art, brought forth their Books and publickly burnt them, (*Acts* 19. 19.) Besides, the great Holiness of their Doctrin, the excellent Rules of Virtue, which it brought to the World, the Exemplary Course of their own Lives, while they carefully practised what they taught, gave great credit to their Miracles too. And in all things did their Miracles, their Lives, and their Doctrin, credit and recommend one another.

But

But now we cannot imagin, that ever God would thus apply his Divine Power to testify a Lie, and recommend a Cheat and Imposture to the World. It is contrary to the inseparable Properties of the Divine Nature to do so, and cannot possibly be done by him, who is a *God of truth and without iniquity*. And thus, I think, it is sufficiently prov'd, That Jesus did indeed rise again on the Third Day from the Dead.

Let us now, in the third place, observe what Account the Holy Scripture gives us of the Reasons or Ends of this Resurrection. And from thence we may learn,

1. That this was due to the Merit and Value of the Sacrifice of his Death. The Scripture every where ascribes it to the Death of Jesus, to have made a perfect attonement for the Sins of Men : It says, *He hath put away Sin, by the sacrifice of himself* : And, *We are sanctified, through the Offering of the Body of Jesus Christ, once for all, (Heb. 10. 10.)* When the Son of God took our Nature, and made himself under the Law, and so liable to the Curse and Death which it threaten'd against our Sin, he, by meer dying, satisfied the Law; the dignity of his Person gave sufficient value to his Death for this purpose; as indeed a Punishment may justly receive its estimate from the quality of the Person that suffers it : And we may find this efficacy of his Death ascrib'd to the dignity of his Person, in *Col. 1. 14.* where the Apostle, speaking of him, says, *In whom we have redemption, through his Blood, even the*

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remission of Sins, who is the Image of the invisible God. We may put the words in this order : In whom we have redemption, even the remission of Sins, through his Blood, who is the Image of the invisible God. This he intimates, is that to which the vertue of his Blood is due, That he is the Image of the invisible God, even the Son, equal in his Nature to the Father. Indeed the Death of this glorious Person in our Nature, for the Sins of Men, was more to the honour of God's Authority and Justice, which had been violated thereby, than if all the whole guilty Race of Mankind had suffer'd Eternal Punishment for them : But then, the Case being thus with the Death of Christ, it was due to him to be soon rais'd to life again. He could not justly abide under Death, the Penalty of Sin, when, by dying, he had made a full attonement for Sin. The Apostle therefore says, *It was not possible he should be holden by the Bonds of Death*, Acts 2. 24. That is, it was not just.

2. His Resurrection was allow'd and design'd, to declare and shew, that he had made a full and sufficient satisfaction for Sin, by the sacrifice of himself, that Men might know they have in him a sufficient Saviour. He is, by the tenor of the New Covenant, to save those that believe on him ; that rely upon the Sacrifice of his Death : And therefore is it said, *God hath set him forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith, in his Blood.* But if he were still lying under Death, the Penalty of Sin, it could not appear to us, that he had made an attone-

attonement for it : This we must needs have doubted of, according to what the Apostle says, *If Christ be not risen again, our Faith is vain, we are yet in our Sins*, 1 Cor. 15. 17. That we might therefore believe on him with full assurance, it was so evidently and notoriously granted, that he should rise again from the dead. In this was he discharg'd, who had undertaken to satisfie for our Sins, and so are we discharg'd too, and it is declar'd, that we may hope for the Pardon of our Sins. The Apostle shews, that his full satisfaction is rather to be concluded from his Resurrection, than his Death, when he says, Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that shall condemn ? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.* Thus is it made easie to us, to believe in him: And this may afford us a firm Peace and a mighty Joy in Believing.

3. His Resurrection was necessary, and was granted, in order to his Ascension into Heaven, for the sake of those great things, which, by the Divine Counsel and Decree, were order'd to depend thereupon. In the virtue of his Death, he was to be our Mediator and Advocate with the Father: And it was intended, as was just, that he should always have the honour of distributing to Mankind the Purchases of his Precious Death; to which end he must needs rise again from the Dead; his Humiliation must have an end, and he must return to his former Dignity and Glory, and must ever live to make Intercession for us, as the Scripture speaks. But a farther Account of

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these things must be given in the Discourse on our Lord's Ascension ; therefore it may be spared here.

And I hasten now, in the last place, to improve the things which have been said for the urging a good and religious Life.

In the first place then, This may justly wean our Hearts from the present Life, and possess us with a further Care for our selves, as it gives us assurance of a future State, and an immortal Duration : How strangely apt we are to forget, that there is a future State and another Life to come after this, every Man may find by his own experience. And from hence we confine all our Thoughts and Care to the present Life, to make this as happy as we can, and do the mean while neglect to provide for the Happiness of our Eternal Duration ; yea, we let our selves be drawn into such Courses as tend to forfeit and destroy all our Eternal Happiness. Let us well observe, then, and consider, how great Assurance we have, in the Resurrection of Jesus, of our own Eternal Duration : In this we may see, 'tis possible for a Soul, once separated, to be united again to its Body ; and for a mortal Creature to become immortal. Besides, the Scripture says, Jesus Christ in his Resurrection was *the First-fruits of them that slept*, (1 Cor. 15.) His Resurrection is as it were a Pledge and Earnest of ours. By his Death, he has purchas'd a right of raising all Mankind from Death : And he has said he will do it, John 5. *All that are in the Graves, shall hear his Voice,* and

and shall come forth. A future Being then, we must have, and we may believe the Scripture, that it will be an Eternal One. Our Bodies shall be raised Incorruptible and Immortal; and what can that be for, but an Eternal Duration? But what Anxious Thoughts, what a Serious Care should this possess us with, to be Happy for Ever! This should be the grand Enquiry and Concern of every one of the Sons of Men, What shall I do to be Happy for Ever? And we should chiefly apply our selves to spend this short Life so, if we can, as to gain thereby an eternally happy one hereafter. This then we ought to settle in our Minds, as a fixed Principle: It is impossible I should be eternally happy, if I can love none but transitory and temporary things: And to be so, I must mind and love, and I must take the course to gain the Favour of God, which alone will be Everlasting Bliss.

2. We may justly be mov'd hereby to forsake our Sins, as we have herein assurance, that upon our doing so they shall be pardon'd. The great God has herein made it appear, that he is fully attuned and satisfied for the Sins of Men. And we may now believe he can be just, and the justifier of sinners too. And then we have herein both encouragement and obligation to repent of and forsake our Sins, What a forcible Encouragement should it be to us, to consider we may yet have the great God, a reconcil'd, a kind, and a loving Father, after all our Affronts and Provocations of him. We shall get infinitely more by our repen-

22 Of our Saviour's Resurrection.

tance and reconciliation with God, than we could by our most advantageous Sins. And the obligation to forsake our Sins, in the assurance of pardon, is very great too. When God himself has found out a way to pardon us consistently with his Honour and Justice ; when the Son of God has purchas'd this for us at the costly rate of his Blood and Death ; when God seeks to be reconcil'd to us, he, whom we have offended, ought not this great kindness to conquer us ! should it not make us immediately lay aside all enmity against so loving and gracious a God ! should we not readily forsake all that is displeasing , all that might be reckon'd an affront to him ! Certainly, to continue in our Sins, after the knowledge of this, is the basest Disingenuity and Ingratitude that we can be guilty of.

3. In the last place, It may justly allure us to a good and religious Life. That we have herein the hopes of attaining the Reward of Everlasting Happiness hereafter, Jesus has taken possession of Eternal Life, not only for himself, but also for all that love and believe on him. Therefore, when he spoke of leaving this World, he said he was going to prepare a Place for them. The Resurrection of good Men is especially assur'd herein ; they are, as it were, Members of his Body, and therefore shall certainly partake in the Privileges of their Head ; therefore he has said, That where he is, they shall be : And, That he will give them Eternal Life, and raise them up at the Last Day. They shall rise then ; and he

he shall fashion these their vile Bodies, that they may be like unto his glorious Body: They shall rise to possess Perfect and Everlasting Happiness both of Soul and Body. Oh, what joyful Hopes are these! And these are the present Rewards of a Good and Vertuous Life. Let us then suffer our selves to be allur'd to it by them. These joyful Hopes will invincibly comfort us under all the Labours and Difficulties of our Duty: These will support us under the inevitable pains, weakness, and decays of our present Mortal Body. These will relieve us under all the contempt, neglect, and ill usage of the unkind, injurious World: They will make the Thoughts of Dying easie and tolerable: They are then a mighty Allay to every Evil which we can be now encumbered with. And, Oh, how valuable, to wretched mortal Men, should these things be, which are a Remedy against every Grief, and able to soften and alleviate every Affliction! Let us then most steadily apply our selves to a Course of Religion and Vertue, that we may constantly entertain and please our selves with these joyful Hopes of a Glorious Resurrection, and Eternal Life and Happiness. Which God, of his infinite Mercy, grant us all, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

THE
PRAYER.

EV^{er} Blessed God ! Who Livest and Reignest for evermore. Thou art the common Fountain of Life, and it is in Thee that we live, move, and have our Being. We humbly thank thee O Lord, as we are bound to do, for the Being and Nature which thou hast given us. We acknowledge our selves bound to live to thy Glory, and to shew forth thy praise both with our Lips, and in our Lives. But alas, we wretched Creatures are fallen from our greatest Excellency, we have polluted our Nature, we are prone to do Evil, and to live so as to dishonour Thee and our selves. We are alas dead in trespasses and sins. We humble, we abhor our selves before Thee ; We have incur'd thy Wrath, and have deserved everlasting Punishment. And we can lay the blame of this our miserable Condition, on none but our selves. Our Destruction is of our selves. But, Blessed be thy Name, it is not a helpless hopeless destruction, which we have thrown our selves into. In thee O Lord is our help ; and thou hast laid help for us upon one that is mighty, and able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by Him. We bless Thee for Jesus Christ thine inestimable Gift, our only Hope and Saviour. The one sufficient and Powerful Mediator between God and Men. We bless thee for his humble Incarnation, and putting himself under the Law, that he might answer, and fulfill the demands of it to our Advantage. We thank thee for the instructing and encouraging Example of his most Holy Life on Earth : We praise thee for his Meritorious Death, and for that he was allow'd to be therein a Propitiation for our sins. We give thee thanks for his glorious

glorious and assur'd Resurrection from the Dead, which encourages our Faith, which revives our hopes: While we consider, that he died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification. Oh Lord! we earnestly long for, we humbly seek an Interest in the Propitiation of his Death, and in the Justification procur'd for us by his Resurrection: Oh! Justifie us freely by thy Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Pardon all our past sins, and let them never be remembred against us. And we beseech thee raise us from the Death of Sin to a Life of Righteousness. Let old things pass away and all things become new in us; Awaken our stupid minds to the Knowledge and Love of thee; Strengthen our feeble Powers to run the way of thy Commands; Teach thou us, O Lord, the way of thy Statutes, that we may keep it unto the End. And as our Lord and Master rose from the Dead, to ascend into Heaven, so let us upon our Resurrection to a New and Divine Life, seek those things which are above. Make us to set our Affections on things above, and not on things on the Earth: To lay up our Treasure there, and to have our hearts there also. Grant us the direction and assistance of thy Grace so to spend this Life, that when we shall be rais'd to Life again, at the last day we may rise to Immortal Life and Happiness in the presence of the Glorified Jesus: Who Liveth and Reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God World without End.

We humbly pray for the whole Race of Mankind: That thy Gospel may run, and be Glorified from the rising of the Sun, to the going down of the same, and many may every where be Partakers of the great Salvation. Send down upon thy Church an abundant measure of thy good Spirit: That his Gifts and Graces may make it Glorious in the Eyes of the World, and it may bring forth much good Fruit to thy Glory. Let these Nations Live in thy sight, and plentifully receive many marks of thy Favour in Temporal and Spir-

Spiritual Mercies. Bless in particular, we pray thee, our Gracious King, give him a long Health of Body, encrease of all Noble and Excellent Endowments of Mind, Perseverance in all Vertue and Goodnes, and great prosperity in His Affairs and Undertakings; and make Him very happy in a Dutiful and Loving People. We pray thee do good to all that are related to us according to their several necessities. Give a Blessing to the means of Grace, which we have this day enjoy'd, and let them have a lasting influence towards the promoting our Holiness and Salvation. Protect us this Night we pray thee from all Evil, and raise us the next Morning fit for, and disposed to do all our Duty, and be thou O Lord for ever our Portion and Reward, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ.

O UR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil: For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever. Amen.

T H E

THE
Religious Observation
OF
SABBATHS,
Stated and Urg'd.

Let us Pray.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Exodus 20. 8.

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy.

THE Great God, that made us, requires the Homage of our Adoration and Worship: And this is due to his Excellent Majesty and Greatness, This becomes our Dependance upon Him, and the Obligations which we lie under both to his Greatness and his Good-

Goodness. Besides, It is the greatest Honour that we can do our selves, to be employ'd thus, it is the highest End that we were made for, and is the Noble Employment of the Glorious Seraphim. And this work must needs be more than any thing else to our Profit and Advantage: For in this we have Communion with the chief Good, and we hold a happy converse with Him who is most ready, and most highly pleased to exercise his Goodness. In this Command our Gracious God has done us the Honour and the Favour to require, That we should set apart one Day in Seven, from all other Imployments, to be spent in his peculiar Presence, and, as it were, in his Company; to acquaint our selves with him, and be at Peace, to derive a peace from thence which the World cannot give; a Day to seek and enjoy in the use of Divine Ordinances, His Spiritual and Eternal Blessings, the best Communications of infinite Almighty Love.

These words which I have read, contain the substance of the Command: In speaking to them, I shall decline the falling into any of the Controversies about it; because I cannot well acquit my self in meddling with them without entring into a large, and entire Consideration of this Commandment, which would be too long a task for this place, and is reserv'd, if it may please God, for Another. I purpose now, by Gods Assistance, to insist upon these Two Heads of Discourse.

1. To shew what Observation of Sabbaths we must Charge our selves with, according to this Command.

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2. I shall with some fit Arguments endeavour to urge and perswade Men to it. And this I shall do in compliance with those wise and pious Injunctions of His Majesty lately Publish'd, One of which is this, " That the " Clergy do use their utmost Endeavour, that " the Lords Day be Religiously observ'd, that " they set a good Example to the People, and " exhort them frequently to their Duty herein.

Let us see, First, what is contained and required in this Command, concerning the Observation of Sabbaths.

And we may take notice, that the word Sabbath in the Hebrew Language signifies Rest or Cessation: And so the Command must be understood to require a day of Rest; of separation from all worldly Business; and whereon we should as much as is possible lay it aside, and withdraw even our Thoughts, as well as our Hands from it.

But we must further Observe; It is not an idle slothful Rest which is the design of the Command, or that we should do nothing else when we lay aside our common worldly Employments. It is added therefore, that we must *Keep the Day Holy*. Now we keep a Day Holy, when we spend it in Contemplating, Praising, and Worshiping of God. A Day is capable of Holiness in no other sense, than as it is devoted to God for Religious Worship: And when God by his Appointment sets it apart for his Worship, then does he Sanctifie or Hallow it: And when we observe it as so set apart, then do we keep it Holy. In a word; This

This Commandment requires such a Rest on this Day as is consistent with, and necessary to, a due Performance of Religious Worship; And such a performance of Religious Worship as is consistent with a due and necessary Refreshment, and Rest of our selves. That we may the more distinctly understand this matter, I shall severally insist a little both upon the Rest, and upon the Employment, or Worship which this Day is to be taken up with.

In the first Place; Let us consider the Rest which it Requires. And here I shall not insist, as is usual, upon this; That we must Rest from the Works of Iniquity on this Day; because this is required of us, not on this Day only but at all times. Tho we may reckon that we are especially obliged to such a Rest on this Day: Because the Wickedness committed on an Holy Day is attended with a double and more enormous Guilt; it has in it the profanation of a Sabbath, besides its Contrariety to some other Command. But I shall insist upon these two particulars following.

1. We must Rest from all Exercise of Body or Mind about our common and worldly Business and Callings, on this Day. This we may see particularly mentioned in the Commandment; For it says to us of this Day, *In it thou shalt do no manner of work.* And God Himself by his Prophets thus explains the Obligation of it. This he requires, Isa. 58. 13. In these words: *If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath from doing thy Pleasure on my Holy Day;* That is, from following thine own Business, and

and worldly Calling ; For that is what he means by our Pleasure there. It appears in that Scripture that God requires such a Rest, in that he makes it the condition of his bestowing those Blessings which he had promised the Children of *Israel* upon their keeping his Commandments. And we may find this Observation of Sabbaths again directed in *Jer. 17.24.* Where God by his Prophet requires, That *no burden be brought through the Gates of the City on the Sabbath day* ; and that they should Hallow it, by *doing no work therein*. And that he might enforce this Direction, and persuade them to Observe it, he promises if they would do so to afford them one of the greatest Blessings that a Nation can enjoy, in *ver. 25.* *Then (says he) shall there enter into this City Kings and Princes, sitting upon the Throne of David, and their City* he adds, *should remain for ever.* The meaning is, he would bless them with a long continuance of their Royal Family, and of the Dominion and Prosperity of that, which is a thing of mighty Importance to the Welfare and Prosperity of any Nation : For this would be to provide for the maintaining of their Unity among themselves, for their Peace and Settlement ; and by consequence for the Improvement of their strength against all Foreign Enemies : And this would be the likeliest means to effect, that their City, or State should endure for ever. We must rest, then, from common worldly Employments on these days : And must not only with-hold our Bodies, but withdraw our Minds also from such Employ-

Employments. As worldly Labour would divert and detain us from the proper work of the Day, so the engaging of our minds in worldly Concerns would hinder the due performance of that Work. And certainly all such Application of Mind and Thought, or of the Discourse and Conversation to such Business, as diverts us from Religious Worship, or as distracts our Minds in the performance of it is unlawful on this Day. He that Worships God, Our Saviour says, must Worship him in Spirit and in Truth; But this a Man can never do while his Heart is after his Covetousness: And we may observe, it is a matter of Rebuke, That Men *drew nigh to God with their Lips, and Worshiped him with their Mouths, while their Hearts were far from him.* This Instance of Rest we are directed to by the Wise and Pious Law of the Kingdom, and by the true Doctrine of our Church. The Law says (2 Cor. 29.) "All Persons shall on every Lords Day apply themselves to the Observation of the same, by the Exercising themselves in the Duties of Piety and true Religion publickly and privately; and no Tradesman shall do or Exercise any Worldly Labour. And the Doctrine of our Holy Church in the case is, That "by this Commandment we ought to have a time, as one Day in the Week, wherein we ought to rest, yea, from our lawful and needful Works. And again it says; "God has given express Charge to all Men, that upon the Sabbath Day, which is now our Sunday, they should cease from all Weekly

“ weekly and work-day Labour. [*Hom. of Place and Time of Prayer.*] Yet I must add, according to that Sermon referr'd to, That we are not bound to observe the Rest of this Day in the same strictness as the Command seems to have required it of the Jews : It may be said therefore, That a Man may, in a pressing Necessity, do a small matter relating to his common worldly Busines on this Day, to prevent a great Damage and Mischief. And the Works of an ordinary Calling may be follow'd, so far as Necessity and Charity require, that is, in tending and administering to the Sick, or in the providing of Food for the Day. And, doubtless, we may labour hard, if such a sad Occasion should call for it, to quench a raging Fire, or repel the Assaults of an Enemy in a lawful War, or to take or gain an Advantage against him.

2. The Rest requir'd on this Day, forbids all such Recreation as would hinder, or render us unfit for, the sanctifying of the Day in the due performance of Religious Worship. It forbids that we let the Recreation and Refreshment of the Body take up more of this Sacred Time than is absolutely necessary to it : That we indulge our selves to Ease and Pleasure, and neglect the Worship of God. And it forbids the Use of any such sorts of Recreations for the kind, as do contradict that solemn and serious Temper of Mind which becomes a Holy Day, and is necessary to the reverent and solemn performance of the Holy Duties of it. The main Busines of the Day must be chiefly

attended upon, that is, the Worship of God ; and whatever does needlessly interrupt or prejudice our performance of that , must be avoided on this Day. If a Day be dedicated to God, every part of it belongs to him ; and no more of it than necessity requires, can justly be appropriated to our selves. Tho', perhaps, somewhat more, than is merely necessary, of Recreation, for the refreshment and support of our frail Body, may be used at other times ; yet, certainly, we may allow our selves no more than this on the Lord's Day. It is worth observing, what a Learned and Pious Divine of our Church says, concerning Recreations on the Lord's Day, which I shall therefore largely insert in this Discourse.

“ Recreation (says he) and Pleasure on any part of this Day, does more dangerously steal away our Hearts from Holy Duties, and distract and unfit us for the due sanctifying of the Day, than the Works and Labours of our Worldly Calling would do. Because Men commonly perform the Business of their Worldly Callings, not so much for it self, or out of love to that, as for the sake of Worldly Profit and Pleasure, which they hope to derive from it. But Pleasure they love, and seek for it self ; and do often so adhere to and dote upon this, that for the sake of it they neglect their Worldly Business and Profit, and also even the necessary Care for the salvation of their Souls. He says, therefore, to them who are wearied with the Labour of the Week,

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“ the Rest on the Lord’s Day from Labour, is
“ the best and fittest Recreation, for the re-
“ freshing of their Bodies: And if they have a
“ good fence and relish of Divine Things, and
“ can take the delight they ought in Religious
“ Performances, these will be sufficient Plea-
“ sure and Recreation to them. And who can
“ reasonably think, (as he says further) that,
“ when a Man is tired with his Week’s Labour,
“ the violent Exercises which are reqnired to
“ many Recreations, and the Bodily Labour
“ requisite to the most, should recreate him
“ more than Devout Prayers, hearing the
“ Word of God, singing his Praises, and hold-
“ ing Religious Conferences with Fellow-
“ Christians. But if Servants and labouring
“ People must have their Time of Recreation,
“ Why must it be borrow’d from the Lord’s
“ Day? Rather should they, who employ
“ them, spare them some of their own time,
“ than lay Sacrilegious Hands upon that which
“ is consecrated and devoted to God. Thus
far that excellent Author leads us in this mat-
ter. (*Downham in his Guide to Godliness.*) I
doubt not therefore to say, That as the whole
Day is consecrate to God, it ought to be im-
ploy’d in Religious Worship, either Publick
or Private, so far as this may be done without
manifest hurt, and too much weariness. And
then, the Use of Worldly Pleasure and Re-
creation on this Day, is as largely forbid as
Worldly Labour and Busines, that is, entire-
ly; excepting what Necessity or Mercy re-
quires to be used. Thus much may suffice, to

shew what Rest and Cessation is required on this Day.

I proceed now to the second thing proposed, which is, To Represent what Employment or Work this Commandment requires for the due sanctifying of this Day: For as we may profane the Day by doing Evil, or Common Works needlessly; so we may profane it too, by doing Nothing. To spend it in sloth and idleness, to sleep a great part of it away, is not to keep it Holy. We must know then, that the Sabbath is to be sanctified or kept holy, especially by such Offices and Works as are strictly and properly religious; for tho' God may be honour'd by other good Works, yet these do more directly honour him. And therefore Religious Worship is the only proper and due Employment of a Day which is dedicated to the Honour and Service of God. We must adore and worship God on other Days: But we may on them do somewhat else too. But this Day is to be set apart to this; this must be the Main Business and Employment of it. It must therefore be ordinarily taken up in such Exercises as these following: In Reading and Hearing the Word of God; in offering devout Praises and Prayers to him: which things may be done in publick and in private, and ought to be so. And we ought, as often as opportunity is afforded us, in the Congregation which we join with, to attend upon and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Some time on this Day, too, should be spent by Masters of Families, and all others,

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who have young Persons under their Government and Care, in the instructing Children and Servants in the Doctrins and Duties of our Religion, and in training them up in the way of Salvation.

I shall now suggest some General Rules, by which our Religious Worship, on this Day, must be managed, that we may rightly and wisely sanctifie it. And the Rules to be observ'd in this Matter are these following :

1. Such a Proportion of Time should be spent in the Religious Performances of this Day, as is commonly employ'd in our Worldly Busines on other Days. It would be a very unbecoming partiality, if we should make long Days in the Service of Ourselves, and but short ones in the Worship of God. And a very foolish difference we should thus make between Sabbaths and other Days, with respect to our own greatest interest and advantage. How absurdly should we manage ourselves, if we should spend six long Days in the Week in pursuing our Worldly Temporal Interests, and put off our Souls with but one, and that a very short one, employ'd to promote the Eternal Interests of them : If we late begin and soon end the happy and advantageous Employment of a Sabbath, which would improve us in Grace and Virtue, in the glorious likeness of God, and in fitness for Heaven. But to this Matter it must be added, That if any do too eagerly follow their Worldly Busines on other Days, and over-tire themselves and their Servants with

it, this is not to be made a Rule for the Proportion of Time which they must spend in Religious Exercises on the Sabbath Day. And if we take care to employ, as well as we can, the whole Day in Religious Duties: We may also take care not to make the proper Work of the Day a Toil or Burden to our selves or others.

2. We must always prefer the Publick Worship, before that which is Private, and attend that, rather than this, when we can. We must know, That the chief End of setting apart this Day, for the performance of Religious Exercises, was, to promote and serve the Publick Worship of God: That an appointed certain Time being settled, the multitude of People might so order their Affairs, as to come together to Worship, and know when to do so. Our Saviour commands, That *our Light should so shine before Men, that they, seeing our good Works, might glorifie our Father which is in Heaven.* Which certainly requires this, among other things, That we worship God in Publick, and with the Congregation of Worshippers, as often as we can. This, as it is a more notorious and visible way of paying him due *homage*, and doing him honour, does therefore do him the more honour. The greatest and most important Blessings of Heaven are very general and common ones: such as are either given or offer'd to us all: These, then, we should join to pray, or to give thanks for, and assemble our selves to receive them. We best acknowledge the Creator's

Infinite Bounty, his Universal Providence, and the Riches of Redeeming Love, when many of us assemble to seek or give thanks for the Favours and Blessings of these. Further, In uniting of our Devotions, we best exercise, and shew our mutual Charity and Concern for one anothers Happiness; which is highly pleasing to the God of Love, and will render our Devotions the more acceptable to him. Private Devotion, especially when this is unproportionably used, is apt to be tinctur'd too much with self-love, and to concern it self for others only so far as their welfare seems necessary to our own. But Publick Worship enlarges the Heart, and tends to possess us with a more Publick Concern: As the choice and preference of this shews, that we have already somewhat of a Publick Spirit. Yet further, to recommend this, it may be added, This is more likely than Private Worship to be advantageous to our selves. For when in the Publick Assembly we unite our Hearts in the same Requests, we help one another to succeed and prevail. Our Saviour intimates this, when he says, *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there will I be in the midst of them.* While each one Prays, not only for himself, but for the rest that are present, in saying, not I, but We, to his Petitions, we do in the Language of a Devout Person, (*Tertul. in Tawerson*) make a Party, by which we besiege Heaven with our Prayers. We must then, when we can, constantly attend upon the Publick Worship; and reckon the Private never

to be perform'd at the same time, but when we are unavoidably hindred from attending on that. The proper time for private Worship on the Lord's Day, is, when that in Publick is at an end, or not yet begun.

3. The last Rule I shall mention is this: Any of those Religious Exereises, which are the proper Work of this Day, may give place for a little while to those Offices of Charity, and Mercy which call for a present attendance. St. *Paul* Ordain'd and Allow'd, the Collection of Charitable Contributions for the relief of the Poor, to be made in the Church of *Corinth*, when the Congregation were Assembled to Worship; as he is commonly understood in what he says, *1 Cor. 16. 2.* We may spend some of this Sacred time in Visiting the Sick, in Ministering to those that need our attendance, in Comforting the Sad and Afflicted, and in Labouring to reconcile those that are at Variance. And even the Jewish strictness of Observing this Day, did allow the feeding of Cattle; and the relieving any Beast in distress, and danger of life, on this Day. From our Saviours telling the *Pharisees*, that the Sabbath was made for Man, not Man for the Sabbath; from his justifying his Disciples in their pulling, and rubbing the Ears of Corn, as they went through the Corn Fields on the Sabbath Day, to satisfie their present hunger; and from his most Excellent Example in Healing all the Diseased Persons that presented themselves to him on that Day, we may learn and conclude, that the Religious Worship of

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the Sabbath may give place to the Exercises of Charity and Mercy, when the Exigence of our Selves or our Neighbour requires it: Especially in all such cases as these which our Saviour has allowed, wherein but a small portion of time was diverted from the more proper business of the Day.

And thus I have represented this matter also according to the excellent Doctrine of our Holy Church: Which I shall therefore produce, that I may the more enforce what I have said: And sure this will inforce it with all those who have a due Reverence for the Authority of the Church. This we find thus speaking, according to the Tenour also of the fore-mentioned Sermon, [*Homily of Time, and Place, of Prayer*] in the Thirteenth Cannon: "Which requires, of all manner of Persons in "the Church of *England*, that they Celebrate, "and keep the Lord's Day, commonly call'd "Sunday, and other Holy Days, according "to God's Holy Will, and Pleasure, and the "Orders of the Church of *England* prescrib'd "in that behalf; That is, in hearing the "Word of God Read, and Taught; in pri- "vate, and publick Prayers; in acknowledg- "ing their Offences to God, and amendment "of the same; in reconciling themselves "charitably to their Neighbours, where dis- "pleasure hath been; in oftentimes receiving "the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood "of Christ; in visiting of the Poor and Sick, "and using all good and sober Conversation.

I have now finish'd the first Head of Discourse: which was to shew, What observation of Sabbaths we must charge our selves with according to this Command. I proceed, then, to the Second, which is to urge this by some fit Arguments and Motives; and I reckon these following to be such:

1. We should consider, to this purpose, the very severe and terrible Judgments which God has often remarkably inflicted on those that have been wont to contemn and neglect his Sabbaths.

By these he has sufficiently enforced his Command, and shewn with Evidence enough, and which ought to be considered, that he is angry still with those who despise and break it. Many that have let themselves be commonly guilty of this Sin, have been remarkably overtaken with Punishment on this very Day; meeting with some very mischievous accident upon it, or with a sudden Death. Many that have thought their poor and strait Circumstances would allow them to encroach upon this Day with their Worldly Business, have been condemn'd to continual Poverty: And, on the contrary; it was the famous Observation of a Great Man amongst us, and in our Age (Judge Hales) That his Affairs never prosper'd better in the Week following, than when he had been most punctual and exact in the due observation of the Sabbath. And I believe no one Instance can be produced in Contradiction, if I should say, that never did any Estate prosper in the Hands of a Mans Posterity

Posterity which he gained by letting his Worldly Busines encroach upon the Lord's Day.

Great and terrible Displeasure is exercised against the Contemners of Sabbaths: When they fall under a Judicial Hardness of Heart, and are abandoned to the Corruption of the Times, the Temptations of the Devil, and the Exorbitant Power of their own Lusts. And this is a sad Judgment which often befalls them: They are often forsaken of God who thus forsake him, and his Worship: and then *They fall from one Wickedness to Another*, they grow enormously Wicked, and perhaps bring themselves soon to the ruine of all their Felicity in this World, perhaps to an untimely Death.

And tho Hand joyn in Hand in this Wickedness it is not wont to go unpunish'd. God's terrible Judgments have fallen heavy upon other Nations and Churches, besides the Jewish, when they neglected and despised his Sabbaths: And we need not go far for Instances of this. We see a Neighbouring Protestant Church in our days trod down by a Prefidious and Barbarous Tyrant; in which it was but too common to begin the Sabbath, perhaps, with Publick Worship, and to end it with the Comedy. And it must be said to us, that *Except we repent, we shall likewise perish*: Especially since God has begun in very terrible stroaks to shew his Displeasure against us. And we may call to mind, that the greatest, and most formidable Disadvantages to our own

own Nation, and which we shall lie under, which are the Schisms and separate Communions, the Division of us into several Factions, the Jealousies, and the Animosities among us, have their *chief Date* from the time when publick sports on the Lords Day were to have been allow'd by Publick Authority. And we know it was, Then, that it pleased God to let ill Men *Kindle a Fire of Civil Dissention, in the Gates of our Jerusalem, which devoured the Palaces thereof.* (Jer. 17. 27.) For our own present Worldly Interest, then, both Publick and Private, we must charge our selves with a Religious Observation of God's Holy Days.

2. It may justly induce us to this, to consider the Necessities of our Souls, and the Benefits which they shall derive from a due Observation of these Days. The approving our Souls to God, the promoting all Piety and Virtue in them, and the fitting them for Heaven do require this of us, as this is an Excellent Means to promote such good Effects. As the Sabbath was made for Man, so 'tis not without great Advantage to himself, that he dedicates it to God. By the proper Employments of this Day, as necessary, and fit Means, We are to be cleansed from our Sins, and freed from the Bondage of our Iniquities: By these we are to be advanced in every weak and defective Grace and Virtue, and to be inur'd to the noblest Exercise of our Mind and Reason, the contemnulating, Praising, Adoring, and Loving of God. To converse much with God tends to make our Faces shine like that of *Moses;*

ses; to transform us into the Divine Likeness from Glory to Glory. He calls us to the proper Employments of this Day, that we may be wean'd from this vain World on which we are too apt to Dote; and that we may become acquainted with our true Happiness; may come to taste, and relish those things wherein it does chiefly lie; and so may be fitted to possess and Enjoy it. To spend this Day in Religious Worship inures us to the Employment, and Happiness of Heaven, and by consequence makes us fit for the Eternal Holy Sabbath that is kept there. This is a Day, then, for the working out of our own Salvation, as well as for the Worship and Honour of God; and we shall do the former by Consequence, as we do the latter by Design, we have a great deal of Reason, then, to spend the Day in such Duties, as entirely as we can.

And this requires, that we apply our selves to Private Worship when that of the Publick is over, as much as we can. For there will be great danger of loosing all the benefit of the Publick if we immediately return to the Pleasures and Business of this World.

“ As it is pernicious (says a Learned and Pious “ Father of our Church) after Exercise to go “ and wash in cold Water; so it must needs “ be extreamly noxious and hurtful to sink “ our selves immediately into Earthly Employ- “ ments, just after our Souls have been war- “ med with Devotion, and the Exercises of “ the Love of God. And if it be not fit nor “ safe

"safe (says he) to return presently to our
"Worldly Busines, much less can it be to-
"lerable to go to merry Entertainments. (Bp.
"of Ely in his *Mensa Mystica*) Certainly, if
the Cares of this World, and the deceitful-
ness of Riches are things in their own nature
apt to choak the Word, and to render it Un-
fruitful, as our Saviour intimates, we give
them the greatest advantage, that can be, to
do so, when our Minds are immediately taken
up with Worldly Affairs as soon as we go
from the Publick Worship. And it will be
no wonder, that Men are lovers of Pleasures
more then lovers of God, if they give them-
selves leave so quickly to apply themselves to
the Pleasures of this World.

3. The Obligations which Men lie under
to the Instructing and Educating those of their
Family in the Knowledge and Practice of our
Religion, require the spending some time in
Religious Worship in the Family on the Lord's
Day. Private Worship I have said, after the
Publick, is necessary to secure, and improve
the Benefit of the Publick. And that parti-
cular Application in Private Instruction, and
Discourie, of things which were deliver'd to
a whole Congregation in Publick, is very ne-
cessary and useful to give them a due and
lasting Impression: Besides, This may call
to mind what they did not heed in Pub-
lick, or what they have forgotten: Or
may serve to continue and improve the
good Affections; to animate and strength-
en the good Resolutions which were rais'd
before

before in their Minds by some other things presented to them. Great will be the Benefit of this Private Instruction if it be well follow'd; And one may not doubt to say, that if it were so, we should not hear so frequent Complaints of undutiful and profligate Children, and of unfaithful, contumacious and slothful Servants. It cannot be question'd, but 'tis the Duty of those who are Heads of Families, to endeavour the teaching of them, who are under their Authority, the Knowledge and Practice of Religion. Often are such commanded to take this Care of their Families in Scripture. And even this Commandment may be reckon'd to intimate this Obligation, in that it requires the Master of the Family to cause, that his Children and Servants do observe this Commandment in particular. No Man can question this Care and Endeavour to be a Duty, who believes himself bound to love God: For it is a necessary and inseparable Character of that to endeavour, that all others, whom we can influence, may reverence and obey, and love him too. Nor can any Man question the Obligation to this, who believes himself bound to the Love of his Neighbour; for that Love will necessarily teach him, that he must endeavour to prevent the Ruine, and promote the Welfare of those, especially, who are under his Authority and Care; which is best done by teaching them Religion. That barbarous Man, then, has no true Love to his Child, who takes no care about his Religion,

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which more than any thing would promote his Present Welfare, besides his Eternal Happiness : And that Master is first himself unfaithful to God and his Servant, who does not look after the Religion of his Servant.

But if the Religious Instruction of Families be due to them from their Head and Gover-nour, then there must of necessity be some fit time set apart for the performance of it. And certainly the fittest time for this is, or might be, with most Families, the Evening of the Lord's Day, after Publick Worship is over. O let not any plead for the allowing Servants that time to be spent in Worldly Pleasures and Recreations, while the deplo-rable Decay of Religion amongst us, and the frequent Ruine of Young Persons do so loudly proclaim the common neglect of this necessa-ry and important Duty. If by a hard and constant Labour, and a great deal of Busines, any Mens Servants are hinder'd from having any Recreation all the Week, they are also thereby hinder'd, without doubt, from receiv-ing this Instruction too : And then 'tis more reasonable, sure, that some such time on the Lord's Day be set apart for it, than that it should be spent in Pleasure and Recreation, and so that they be never duly instructed in the Religion by which they must be sav'd.

To conclude, He who thus endeavours to instruct his Family, will instruct himself in doing it ; and while he endeavours to revive, continue or improve the good Impressions which they receiv'd in publick, he will pro-mote

mote his own. And by this means, the Tranquillity and Peace of Families, the Easiness, the Usefulness, the Comfort of all in it to one another would be mightily encreas'd, as well as the most Desirable Glory and Love of God in the World, and the Everlasting Salvation of Souls. And now, I hope, we are all disposed to *Remember and Keep Holy the Sabbath Day.* And to say heartily, with our Holy Church, *Lord, have Mercy upon us, and encline our Hearts to keep this Law.* Amen.

THE PRAYER.

O Most glorious and most gracious God ! Thou art good, and doest good : Thou hast exercised abundant goodness to the Children of Men. We are bound to love thee and praise thee for our Creation. Thou hast given us a Noble Nature ; made us little lower than the Angels, and plentifully furnish'd this World with excellent Creatures, to serve our use and delight, and hast given to Man dominion over the Fowls of the Air, the Beasts of the Earth, and the Fishes of the Sea. Every one of our Senses presents us with the Exercises of thy Goodness, and with Obligations and Admonitions to love thee. Every Moment of our Lives, declares it to us ; for it is in thee, that we live, move and have our Being : Thou holdest our Soul in Life, and we are beholden to thee, O Lord,

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for our continual Preservation. And it exceedingly magnifies thy Goodness, and must improve our Praises for it, that in this instance of it, thou art good to the unthankful and the evil. Thou art mindful of those who forget thee, and exercisest kindness to them that hate thee. Great and wonderful, O Lord, is thy Patience and Forbearance towards thy Rebellious Creatures. But, above all, we must celebrate and praise that Instance of thy glorious Love, the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ! This, O Lord, especially, is a Favour that exceeds our highest Praises! It is equally wonderful and kind! Thou hast given thy Son to bear our Sins and be a Propitiation for them. We bless thee for his Meritorious Passion and Death. Thou hast given him to us, to be our Mediator and Advocate: We bless thee for his Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven. O Lord, we humble our selves before thee, in a sense of thy great Goodness to us, and our vile and ungrateful Behaviour towards thee. We have abused thy creating, preserving, redeeming Love, and must acknowledge the guilt and vileness of our Sins to be increased with the encrease of thy Benefits and Goodness towards us. O give us, we beseech thee, a true and unfeigned Repentance of all our Wickedness: Give us a true and lively Faith in Jesus Christ. Let thy abundant Love and Goodness to us, inflame our Hearts with a mighty love to thee. Forgive us, our past Sins, and cleanse us from all Unrighteousness. Let thy Sabbaths be always a delight to us, that we may set our selves on them, to contemplate and praise thy glorious Nature, and wonderful Works and Goodness. Fit us for the happiness of Communion with thee, and let us enjoy it in the use of thine Ordinances, that we may acquaint our selves with thee and be at peace; that we may, while we behold thee, be transformed into thy likeness, from glory to glory. Grant that we may flourish in the Courts of our God, and encrease in every Grace; be strengthened with Might in the Inward Man against all Temptations, and

and so may run, with patience, the Race that is set before us ; and obtain, at length, the Rest of an Eternal Sabbath with thee.

We humbly pray unto thee for all Mankind, that thy Way may be known upon Earth, thy saving Health among all Nations. We pray especially for the good Estate of the Catholick Church : Favour it every where with the pure Administration, the mighty Success, and peaceable Enjoyment of thine Ordinances. Let all true Piety and Virtue abound in it, and what may adorn and recommend our Religion to the World. Blest abundantly that part of it which is planted in these Nations : And as thou hast favour'd us with the Means of Grace in great plenty, so give us the Grace to bring forth answerable Fruit to thy glory. Give our King, we pray thee, the choicest Blessings of this Life ; continue him long to Rule over us, and make us happy in his Government of us : and, after all, bless and reward him with the Glories and Honours of thy Heavenly Kingdom. Blest the Royal Family with Long Continuance, with Abundant Grace, and all Worldly Honour and Felicity. We humbly recommend, in particular, all our Relations ; dispose of their Circumstances in this World mercifully, and sanctifie all thy Dealings with them to the promoting their Everlasting Salvation. Accept our humble Praises and Thanks for the Mercies of this Day : Forgive the Iniquities of our Holy Things : Let us lie down in thy Favour, and rest in Safety ; and raise us up again, if it please thee, to shew forth thy Praise with our Lips and in our Lives. All we humbly ask, in the Name of Jesus Christ thy Son our Saviour.

Our Father, &c.

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THE
Baptismal Covenant
REPRESENTED:
WITH
The Means to Observe it.

Let us Pray.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deut. 4. 23.

Take heed to your selves, lest ye forget the Covenant of the Lord your God which he made with you.

THE great Author of our Being, as he has therein right to Govern, so he does exercise a Dominion over us. He has all along, ever since he made Mankind, given us a Law, to be the Rule of our Actions, and requir'd the Observance of it, as the Condition of his

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Favour. This Method of dealing with us, is call'd, The Covenant of the Lord our God. Of the Ten Commandments pronounced from Mount *Sinai*, and afterwards written by God on Tables of Stone, it is said, They were the words of the Covenant which God proposed to the People of *Israel*, *Exod.* 34. 28. And we may observe, by the words next to those which I have read for our present Text, That the same Law is the Covenant which *Moses* speaks of here: For the Instance of forgetting that Covenant which he particularly warns them against, is, The breaking one of those Commands. Now, since this is God's Method of dealing with Mankind, if we would ever partake of the Exercises of his Favour to our Everlasting Happiness; we must submit to his Laws, and engage to perform the Terms and Conditions of his Favour, which he proposes and requires of us. And when we do take this Engagement upon our selves, and do remember and perform it, then does the gracious Promise of God bind him too, and we come to have a right and claim to his Eternal Mercies. This is the thing which the Prophet exhorts the People of *Israel* to in our Text, That they would remember and consider their Part of the Covenant which they had enter'd into with God, and would set themselves to observe and do it. Which Exhortation we shall do well to apply to our selves, for that it certainly concerns us as much as them. Now the Covenant which we are at present under, and by which we must be sav'd, is that which we enter

ter into at our Baptism : At which time we are Infants, and do not distinctly understand our part of the Engagement ; as indeed, while we are Infants, we need not do, but may partake of the Salvation, which is the Favour on God's part, without it, if we die in our infancy. Because God requires of no Creature that, as necessary to obtain his Favour, which it has not a natural power to do. And the Covenant which we enter into at Baptism, is not so often call'd to Peoples minds in the Administration of that Sacrament, as our Church has excellently provided it should be, through many Disorders that are amongst us : For which Reasons, I think this a Subject very necessary and useful to be insisted on in this way. In speaking to it, I shall insist upon these following Heads of Discourse.

1. To shew, What is the Tenor of that Covenant which we are at present under, and by which we must expect to be sav'd.

2. To shew, That this is a Covenant which the Lord our God has made with us, and that at our Baptism.

3. I shall suggest, How we may best assist our selves to remember and observe this Covenant, and so secure to our selves the Everlasting Mercies on God's part of it.

I shall, in the first place, give an Account of the Nature and Tenor of that Covenant which we are now under ; which, without knowing it distinctly, we cannot possibly comply with or observe it. But, to introduce an Account of this, I must take notice, That all Mankind

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are become Sinners before God, by the Sin and Fall of our First-Parents. By the Disobedience of one, many were made sinners, says the Apostle; and God hath concluded all under Sin. From hence we deserve the Eternal Wrath of God, and the Everlasting Punishments of Sin: This is the sad condition of our very Birth: Therefore the Scripture says, *We are by Nature, Children of Wrath.* Now to this state of our Case is this gracious Covenant most wisely and mercifully suited: Both in what it demands and requires of us; and in what it offers and promises from God. I shall represent it in both the parts of it severally.

First, Let us see what it requires of us; and on what Terms and Conditions we must now expect to recover the Favour of God and our Happiness. These the Christian Church has very anciently thought fit to represent, as our Church does, under the three following Heads:

1. We must Renounce the Devil and all his Works; the Pomps and Vanity of this wicked World; and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.
2. We must believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.
3. We must keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of our Life.

Let us a little consider these severally, that we may understand what Particulars they contain; which is a thing that is too seldom done.

In the first place, We are to Renounce, &c.

Having all of us Revolted from God, the first thing we have to do, that we may recover his Favour is, very fitly, That we repent of our Wickedness, and abandon every Evil Course; and so we must fall out with all the Causes of our Wickedness; we must resolve and engage, that they shall never lead nor govern us any more; This is that which is meant by our Renouncing of them.

We must thus *Renounce the Devil and all his Works.* This is he who drew our First-Parents into sin; whose whole business it is to promote, and propagate Wickedness in the World. That he may not draw us into Sin, and because he is an Enemy to God, we must resolve never to hold any Correspondence with him: That we will not consult him, nor seek his Assistance in any way; neither as Witches and Sorcerers do, who are in a formal compact with this Enemy of God; Nor as they do who go to such Wretches for their Counsel or Assistance in any Matters; for both these things are instances of a guilty Correspondence with the Devil. In renouncing the *Works* of the Devil we engage to forsake and abandon those sins in particular, which do especially bear the Black Characters of his Wickedness upon them. Such as Pride in all the usual Exercises of it, which is intimated to be his great sin, 1 Tim. 3. 6. And all Lying and Falshood, *For the Devil is a Lier and the Father of Lies,* John 8. 44. And all Malice, and Envy, and ill Will; the desiring of Mischief, and delighting in the

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Hurt of any one which are eminently the Properties of the Devil : For he is a Murderer from the beginning ; (ib.) *And goes about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour, or destroy,* 1 Pet. 5. 8. We must abhor also and forsake that common practice of the Devil, the leading or tempting others into Wickedness ; upon the account of which he is call'd a Tempter : To endeavour to Debauch and Corrupt others, and promote Wickedness in the World, is enormously to do and cherish the works of the Devil, and a monstrous instance of the Hatred both of God and our Neighbour.

In the next place, We must Renounce too *the pomps and vanities of this wicked World :* This binds us to abhor and abstain from all that which is wicked in the World ; and also from that which tends to Wickedness, in as much as it does so. Even those lawful things of this World, which we might otherwise seek and enjoy when we cannot do these without sin, must be quitted and forsaken. It includes, That we be ready to part with, or be contented to want any worldly Comforts and Possessions whatever, when they stand in competition with our Duty to God. It requires, that we do not seek what we cannot innocently enjoy ; and that we do not guiltily and inordinately seek what we may lawfully enjoy. We must engage, that the things of this World shall not have the chief Interest in our Affections ; nor be either our greatest desire while we want, or our chief Delight and Satisfaction while we have them. It is included herein,

herein, That we must Renounce the Society of the wicked World. That we do not make the Corrupt Maxims, or Evil Customs of it our Rule to walk by, nor follow a Multitude to do Evil: And must concern our selves rather to please God than Men. Those who have given themselves up to any sort of Wickedness, are such as we must shun to converse with as much as we can: Unless we can have any hopes by our good Example before them, or by our Admonitions and Reproofs to Convert them from their Wickedness. We must not make the sin of others our sport or entertainment; nor set the Wickedness of other Men on work to promote our Ends and Designs, tho' they be lawful and just in themselves. We must take no part in the wickedness of the World. By Renouncing the Pomps and Vanity of it, we engage to abstain from all that extravagancy in Dress and Ornament which Pride and Wantonness suggest, and which are design'd to be serviceable to them: When the Adorning is intended to be an Instrument of guilty allurement and temptation; when this is Prodigally costly, and beyond what can well be spared from other necessary Expences; when it is nicely endeavour'd, and is very Elaborate and Affected; as I doubt not to account painting of the Face to be, and the wearing of needless Patches; that is, such as are not put on to conceal an offensive Defect, but only to Improve and Adorn the Beauty. And Lastly, such excess in this matter must be forsaken as confounds the distinctions

ons of Persons, and is above the Rank and Degree which the Providence of God has placed us in.

In the last place, *We must renounce too all sinful desires of the Flesh*: This chiefly respects sensual Sins, and the source and spring of them. And so we may reckon the Flesh here signifies, the Natural Body which we carry about with us with all the Appetites, Sences, and Animal Faculties of that. Our Covenant with God does not require us to destroy our Natural Appetites, but only to govern them. It requires that we so regulate our selves in our Gratifications of them, as not to break the Laws of God, nor contradict any of our Duties: We must not be lovers of Pleasures more than lovers of God. It is said we renounce the *Sinful Lusts of the Flesh*; those Desires and Motions of them which would lead us into any Sin: We renounce those guilty Sensualities of Sloth and Idleness, of Gluttony and Drunkenness, Luxury or Uncleanness. And indeed this requires that we do abridge the Flesh, sometimes, in some measure of its lawful Gratifications; when this is necessary to subdue the Appetites of it, to bring them into Subjection, and render them Governable; that we may keep them Innocent, and be our selves always in a readiness to receive and comply with the good Motions of the Holy Spirit.

This is the first main Branch in our part of the Covenant with God which we are now under.

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The Second is this ; That we will believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. These the Church has been wont to reckon are summarily comprehended in that which is commonly call'd the *Apostles Creed*. And it is included under this Head ; That we will endeavour to know, and understand what things are contained in these Articles : That we will apply our selves very seriously, as leisure from other necessary and indispensable Duties will allow, to make the best Improvement we can of the Means of getting Divine Knowledge which the Providence of God affords us ; and to gain as full and as distinct a knowledge of Divine Truths as our Capacity and Opportunities will let us. That we will not through Negligence or Hatred of the Truth, be Ignorant of any important Reveal'd Truth.

And when we know these things we must firmly Assent to them, and acknowledge them for Truths, because God has Reveal'd them : Who is infinitely Wise, and cannot err ; and who is faithful and true, and therefore will not lead us into Error. We must also rely upon the truth of these things, and suffer our selves to be govern'd by them ; betaking our selves to such a course of Life as they require. For Instance ; Believing there is a God who is the Maker and Preserver of us all, we must Reverence, and Worship, and Obey Him : Believing our selves Sinners, and Unworthy to approach him, or expect any good thing from him, we must Humble, and Abase, and Condemn our selves before him : And believing that

that the Son of God is become a Propitiation for our Sins ; and ever Lives to make Intercession for us as our Advocate with the Father, we must rely upon the Merits of his Death and Sacrifice of himself, and come to God in his Name, hoping to succeed by his Intercession in our Addresses to the Throne of Grace. And believing that all the Blessings we stand in need of to our Happiness, are wrought in us, and conferr'd upon us by the Holy Ghost, we must seek to him for them, and wait on him in the diligent use of appointed means of Grace to Obtain them.

Lastly, We are also required herein to make open Profession of the Religion contain'd in these Articles ; to own it to the World, that we are, and will be Worshipers of the only True and Living God, by one Mediator Jesus Christ. And we must rather suffer any Loss, or die any kind of Death, than renounce or deny this True Faith.

The Third and last part of our Engagement is this, that we will keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our Lives. This Obliges us to take the Laws of God for our Rule; to guide our Thoughts, our Words, and our Actions by them. We must desire and endeavour to perform an Universal Obedience of the whole Man to the whole Law of God. Tho' we are not able perfectly to keep the Commands of God, yet we must desire this, and must strive to come as near it as we can: That is, we must not let our selves be guilty of any one known,

known, wilful, or deliberate Sin. This Covenant bears indeed with involuntary Sins, but with none but such: That is, with those which we commit through Ignorance, when that Ignorance is not occasion'd by our neglect or refusal to be Informed or Convinced: Or those which we commit through inconsideration in a hurry, or by a suprise, which are but some smaller Instances of Sin, and such as are past over on a sudden.

Therefore it is also required, That we apply our best Endeavours to study and learn our Duty: That we be humble and teachable; easie to be convinced of, and easie to be perswaded to it. It requires too, That we take heed to our Ways, and walk Circumspectly; That we make it our great care and concern to avoid doing Evil, and to perform the Good that is required of us; That we do not needlessly and carelessly throw our selves into Temptation.

These are the Duties and Conditions required of us by the Covenant we are now under: And does not this representation of them make it appear to every one, That it is but too necessary to call these things to our Minds? It is easily observ'd in others, that many among those who call themselves Christians, do live wofully heedless and forgetful, that they are bound to such things as these; and in our selves it is but too easie for every one of us to observe, that we are exceeding prone to neglect them.

I proceed now to the second Part of this
Cove.

Covenant; to shew what are the Favours and Blessings which it offers and promises us from God. The representation of which may serve as an Argument to excite us to the performance of our Duties. And upon our sincere engagement and care according to our capacity to perform our part in this Covenant, these following Blessings become due to us by the gracious and free Promise of God, and shall be faithfully performed.

1. We shall obtain a full and free Pardon of all our Sins. He Pardons our Original Sin upon our entrance into this Covenant, so that the Guilt which we deriv'd from our First-Parents with our Nature, shall not be remember'd against us, nor condemn us. And he Pardons all the Actual Sins which we were before guilty of; tho' they were Wilful, tho' Deliberate and Habitual Sins. And if we have broken this Covenant by any Wilful Sin, it is so gracious and condescending to our present Weakness, that we are allow'd to renew it again; and may hope for the Benefits of it, upon our hearty and sincere Repentance for that Sin, and our forsaking it for the time to come. And, having Pardon'd our Sins, the Righteous and Gracious God receives us into Favour, deals with us as Righteous Persons, and those whom he Loves. We may with an humble Boldness make our Addresses to him for all things necessary to the Comfort and Serviceableness of this present Life, and to our Everlasting Salvation and Happiness in the World to come.

2. Ano-

known, wilful, or deliberate Sin. This Covenant bears indeed with involuntary Sins, but with none but such: That is, with those which we commit through Ignorance, when that Ignorance is not occasion'd by our neglect or refusal to be Informed or Convinced: Or those which we commit through inconsideration in a hurry, or by a suprise, which are but some smaller Instances of Sin, and such as are past over on a sudden.

Therefore it is also required, That we apply our best Endeavours to study and learn our Duty: That we be humble and teachable; easie to be convinced of, and easie to be perswaded to it. It requires too, That we take heed to our Ways, and walk Circumspectly; That we make it our great care and concern to avoid doing Evil, and to perform the Good that is required of us; That we do not needlessly and carelessly throw our selves into Temptation.

These are the Duties and Conditions required of us by the Covenant we are now under: And does not this representation of them make it appear to every one, That it is but too necessary to call these things to our Minds? It is easily observ'd in others, that many among those who call themselves Christians, do live wofully heedless and forgetful, that they are bound to such things as these; and in our selves it is but too easie for every one of us to observe, that we are exceeding prone to neglect them.

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2. Another Favour of this Covenant is our Sanctification. As he will Justifie, he will Sanctifie us; he will both forgive our Sins, and cleanse us from all Unrighteousness. We shall, through the Spirit given to us, be inable to mortifie the Deeds of the Body; to conquer and subdue the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. We shall have Grace to withstand the Assaults of the Devil; For he that is born of God keepeth himself, and that Evil One toucheth him not, *1 John 5. 18.* And the Faith which is in us shall give us the Victory over the World. We shall be sufficiently fortified against all our Spiritual Enemies; and be furnish'd for every good Work. The Grace of God will teach us effectually to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Rightioully and Godly in this present World. God will write his Law in our Hearts, and put his Fear in our Inward Parts. And when we are come sincerely to desire, and heartily to will and purpose to keep the Commands of God, as it is his Grace which has thus far prevented us, so he will also further us by his continual Help: He will inable us to do that which is good. This is that our Saviour intimates, (*Mat. 5. 6.*) when he says, *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled.* He that desires and endeavours to keep the Commands of God shall be inable to keep them; so far as that he shall be accepted with God through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ. This Saint Paul speaks from his own happy Experience,

rience, when he says, *I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.*

3. The Third Blessing and Favour of this Covenant is, That God will advance us at last to an Everlasting and Perfect Happiness both of Soul and Body in Heaven. Tho' the good Man must undergo Death as well as all Mankind; yet has Christ promised, that whosoever believes on him he shall have Everlasting Life, and he will raise him up again at the last Day. The Bodies of such, tho' they be utterly dissolv'd into scatter'd Dust, shall be gather'd together again and rais'd to Life, and be united again to the same Soul which they had before. And these vile Bodies shall be very happily improv'd; they shall be rais'd in great Beauty and Glory, and be fashioned like unto Christ's Glorified Body. We shall if we keep our Covenant with God, be taken at the close of the last Judgment, to inherit the Kingdom prepared for Mankind from the beginning of the World: To enjoy that Advanced and Excellent Happiness, to which it is likely our first Parents should without Death have been translated after a certain time spent on Earth, if they had been steadfast in their Duty, and Obedient to their Maker. We shall be admitted to dwell in the most Blissful Presence of God; and where we shall be perfectly free from all Evil and Affliction for ever; and shall be satisfied with the eternal Communications of infinite and bounteous Love.

Thus I have shewn what is the Nature and Tenour of that Covenant which we are now under,

under, and by which we must expect to be saved. But to the Description of this Covenant, it is necessary to add the Demonstration that we are actually under it; which I proposed to do for a Second Head of Discourse. I shall make it appear then, That we are all of us actually engag'd to perform these Duties which have been mention'd; and therupon were admitted to have Right to these Blessings and Favours; and that this was done at our Baptism. This happy Right therefore we retain if we have faithfully kept to the performance of our Duties; or We may recover it upon the Renewal of our engagement, and return to our Duty. And we must reckon upon it, that we have no Right to these Mercies; we cannot expect ever to obtain them, if we do not remember, that we are engaged to do those Duties mentioned, and if we do not perform them.

I shall first make it appear, That we were engag'd to the performance of our part in this Covenant at our Baptism. And this will be sufficiently prov'd if it appears in Scripture, that such things are required of them who are Baptised; for then it follows, That whoever receives Baptism, he does therein testify, that he binds himself to do such things.

Now we shall find *Repentance* requir'd of them who come to be Baptised. *John the Baptist*, who was the First Minister of this Sacrament, made Repentance a great part of the Subject of his Preaching. And then we may justly believe he Baptised none without Professions and Decla-

Declarations of this, if they were capable to make them! Especially, since we are told of the Multitudes that came to him, that they were baptized of him in *Jordan*, confessing their Sins, *Matth. 3. 6.* Without doubt this Confession was in Terms expressing their Godly Sorrow for their Sins, and Resolutions to forsake them. Again, This appears to have been required afterwards by the Apostles of Jesus Christ, in many places; but that one may suffice, *Acts 2. 38.* where St. Peter exhorts the Jews to repent and be baptized. Now, in Repentance, is included such a Renunciation of all the Causes of Sin, as has been mention'd.

That a *Resolution to keep the Commands of God*, is also requir'd to attend our taking of Baptism, may appear sufficiently by that one Scripture, *1 Pet. 3. 21.* where the Apostle says, *Baptism saves us not by putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but by the Answer of a Good Conscience towards God.* By the Answer of a Good Conscience towards God, the Apostle is understood to allude to some Questions that were wont to be put to persons who came to be baptized. And then he means by it, The Profession or Declaration of a Good Conscience; An Engagement to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God, and towards Men; or a Resolution to keep the Commands of God. Baptism saves us by this: That is, Baptism gives us a Right to the Favours and Blessings of the Covenant; which are therein conferr'd upon a sincere and declar'd Resolution of this.

Lastly, We may observe, That *Faith in the Articles of Christian Religion*, is also requir'd of them who come to be baptized. It was one part of *John the Baptist's Preaching*, That the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, or the Messiah was to be shortly reveal'd: And therefore we must suppose, that he exacted of those he baptized, the belief of this. And this was very evidently required afterwards, as we may see in the Baptizing of the Eunuch, by *Philip*, mention'd *Act 8*. After that this Evangelist had been preaching to him the Doctrin of the Gospel, the Eunuch says, See, here is Water, What doth hinder me to be baptized? (Verse 36.) Philip says to him, (Verse 37.) If thou believest with all thine Heart, thou mayest. He answered and said, I believe, that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*. And hereupon he was baptized. This Profession contain'd the Sum and Substance of the Christian Faith.

Now when these things are required of them who come to be baptized, it appears, that Baptism is appointed for a Token and Declaration of such an Engagement on our parts: And then the receiving of Baptism is a putting our selves under such an Engagement.

Let us now see, in the second place, That the Favours and Blessings which have been mention'd, are the things which God, on his part, bestows in and by the Sacrament of Baptism. This Sacrament is intended, by God to be a Means and Instrument to convey those Blessings, and never fails to do it effectually,

but when it is hindred by our own default. God, who is abundant in Goodness and Truth, has appointed this Sacrament as a Means to convey his Saving-Grace; and such an one will never mock us with empty Ceremonies; nor disappoint our Expectations of his Mercies, by the reserve of any secret Decree, when we seek them in the way of his appointment. Let us see then, if the Holy Scripture gives us any intimations, that such Blessings are bestow'd in and by our Baptism; for then we may, being baptized, if we perform our part of the Covenant, confidently expect them.

The Forgiveness of Sins, is conferr'd hereby, as the Scripture in many places testifies. It is said, *John the Baptist* preached the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins, *Mark* 1. 4. intimating, that his Baptism did bestow this Favour upon those who came to it truly penitent. This is suggested also by those words of *Ananias* to *Saul*, *Arise (says he) and be baptized, and wash away thy Sins*, *Acts* 22. 16. He says, *Wash them away*, with a plain allusion to the Water which was to be used in the baptizing him, and because the Pardon of his Past-sins was to be conferr'd upon him in this.

We find also *Sanctification* mention'd, as conferr'd in and by this Sacrament. Hence our Saviour speaks of this as the Instrument of our New Birth, and that by which the blessed Influences that effect this are convey'd; in that he says, *Except a Man be born of Water and of the*

the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, John 3.5. If a Man must be born of Water, this is an Instrument and Means of his New Birth. He puts together Water and the Holy Ghost, to signify, that the sanctifying Influences of the Holy Spirit are conferr'd in the Administration of Baptism; for it is the Water of this Sacrament which he there speaks of. The Apostle *Paul* also says to some, after they had been baptized, and made Converts to Christianity, *But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified*; intimating, that they had receiv'd this Sanctification in and by this Sacramental Washing, *1 Cor. 6. 11.*

Lastly, There is herein convey'd also, *A Right and Title to Everlasting Blessedness.* We find the Apostle expressing this in *Tit. 3. 5, 6, 7.* where, indeed, he speaks of all these Blessings, as conferred in and by our Baptism: His words are these, *According to his Mercy, he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his Grace, we should be made Heirs, according to the Hope of Everlasting Life.* Here he plainly ascribes it to the washing of Regeneration; that is, this Sacrament, as the Means and Instrument of Conveyance; that we are renew'd by the Holy Ghost, and sanctified; that we are justified by the Grace of God; and are made Heirs of Everlasting Life, as we hope to be.

Thus, I think, it does sufficiently appear, that the Covenant, which has been now describ'd,

scrib'd, is that which the Lord our God has made with us at our Baptism. We see what things we are engag'd to do, and what a mighty encouragement we have to perform them: We see what must be the Care and Busines of our Lives ; or else we shall be judg'd to renounce and disown our Baptism : And then we must never pretend to expect, that we shall be partakers of these glorious Blessings. Much might be said to perswade Men to take heed to themselves, that they forget not this Covenant: But the thing it self speaks for this. It appears, that we are engag'd, and shall prove false to God, if we do not perform our part ; and it is certain, we shall never partake of these glorious and necessary Favours, without doing so. These are then a strong Invitation and Inducement to the Performance of our Duty.

I pass then to the last thing I proposed to do, which was, To suggest and shew, how we may best help our selves to remember and observe this Covenant ; and so may secure to our selves these Everlasting Mercies which are offer'd on God's part in it. To which purpose I might urge the Praying earnestly for the Grace of God ; and the diligent and constant Attendance on the Preaching of the Word of God : But I shall rather insist on what is, perhaps, more considerable, and yet more neglected, which is this: We must, to this purpose, accustom our selves frequently and solemnly to renew this Covenant in a prepar'd Celebration of the Sacrament of the

Lord's Supper. When we come to Years of capacity, to know and chuse our own Actions, it is very justly expected by Almighty God, that we solemnly take upon our selves this Covenant: That we make it our own Act and Deed, to devote our selves to him, and seek his offer'd Favour and Mercy. And since he has appointed this other Sacrament to be the Rite wherein this is to be done, we must do it in the using of this, if we would be accepted with him. We must prepare our selves then for the Lord's Supper as soon as we can, when we can understand what we do; by considering the Tenor of the Baptismal Covenant; by possessing our selves with a deep sense of the Necessity and Excellency of those Blessings which it offers us; and by stirring up in our selves thereupon an earnest Desire to obtain them, and a firm Resolution and Purpose to do our part of the Covenant, that so we may obtain them. And being thus prepar'd, we must, in taking this Sacrament, bind our selves to those things, and declare, that we seek and hope for those Mercies upon our performance of such gracious Conditions. Most certainly, if we have ever contradicted and broken this Covenant, God himself will never reckon it rightly and duly renew'd, unless we renew it in the celebration of this Sacrament, if he affords us means and opportunity of doing so. Besides, the more solemnity this renewal of our Covenant is perform'd with, the more impression will the doing of it make upon us; and by consequence, the more strong and lasting

ing it is likely to be. And this Sacrament is, in its own nature, very fit to assist us in the performance of our Duties, and so to confirm our Covenant: It has such important Representations in it, as do of themselves tend to these happy Effects. When we see there a lively Representation of the Death of Christ, of his broken Body, and his Blood shed for us, and must consider, that this Sacrifice of his Death was the costly Price which procur'd the Favour of this Covenant for us, will not this effectually dispose us to value and comply with this Method of our Salvation? Will it not force us to think, we should be basely ungrateful to the Dying Love of our Redeemer, if we should neglect this offer'd Mercy? When we see there, how great and precious a Sacrifice our Sins requir'd to make atonement for them! Our Saviour and Friend put to Death, by our Wickedness and his own Love! Will not this make us mourn greatly for our Sins! Melt our very Hearts into Tears of Penitent Grief! And turn us to loath, abhor, and forsake every Evil Way! When we see there how much Jesus, the Son of God, has lov'd us, how much he has done to save us, may not this greatly encourage our Faith, to address to him, and rely upon him for Salvation! And when it calls to our Minds, that we are bought with a Price, even with the Price of his most precious Blood; he has made a Dear Purchase of us; this will strongly suggest to us, that we are not to think our selves our own: We must not live to our selves, but henceforth live to him

him, that died for us: We are under the greatest Obligations to obey every Command, that so kind and gracious a Master can think fit to lay upon us: We ought to mortifie and subdue all Corrupt Affections, and banish from our Hearts all Inordinate Lusts, all his Enemies and Competitors, and resolve to be entirely his, and mind nothing so much as to study and do what will please him in the whole Course of our Lives. Besides all this, we may consider, That this Sacrament is appointed by Christ himself, as a Means to convey Spiritual Strength and Grace to us, whereby we may be inabled to do what he requires of us. Here, he that Hungers and Thirsts after Righteousness shall be filled: Here, he will give the Holy Spirit abundantly to them that ask him: Here, he bestows all the Happy Benefits of his Passion to the Meet Receivers; all that is promised on God's part of this Covenant; and Grace to perform what is requir'd on ours! Oh, that Men were sensible how great Advantages they lose, when they withdraw themselves from this Sacrament! That they would consider and believe what the Scriptures says of it! That it is the *Communication of the Body and Blood of Christ*; A Conveyance of Divine Grace; It will make the frequent and serious Attenders upon it, Partakers of the Spirit of God, to assist and strengthen them against the strongest Corruptions, against the greatest Temptations, and all the Difficulties of their Duty; this would secure their Perseverance in Holiness, and their

their attainment of Everlasting Happiness. Let us suffer our selves then to be perswaded to take as many Opportunities as we can have to prepare our selves, and come to this Sacrament ; that we may be stedfast in this happy Covenant with God. And so shall we certainly find true, what the Psalmist says, *Psal. 25. 10.* *All the paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth to such as keep his Covenant and his Testimonies.* Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory World without End. *Amen.*

T H E
P R A Y E R.

O Eternal God ! Lord of Heaven and Earth ; Creator, and Owner, and Preserver, and rightful Sovereign over us. Thou hast made all things of thy self ; and we ought to set our selves to live for thy Glory. Thou hast laid thy Laws upon us ; and we ought to make them the sole rule of our Actions. And it is very Just and Righteous that thou hast always made our doing so the necessary condition of thy Favour, and of our Happiness in the injointment of it. Thou requirest herein no more than what is naturally and indispensably due to thee. We must therefore condemn and abhor all the wickedness of the World, which contradicts that Honour and Obedience which is thy due ; and is Rebellion, Ingratitude, and Injustice against thee, as well as affront to thy most Glorious Perfections. And we must needs admire and praise thy wonderful goodness to Mankind in that thou hast not for this,

this, past an irrevocable sentence of Damnation upon us. Thou hast condescended to offer us again thy Favour upon Gracious and easie terms: And hast proposed to us a New Covenant whereby we may be saved. We give especially most humble and hearty thanks for the kind and necessary Mediation of the Son of God: by whose gracious undertaking, and by whose most precious Blood, this Favour was procur'd. And we have further reason to bleſs and praile thy mercy towards us in particular, who are here before thee, for that we were by the kind dispensation of thy Providence in our Baptism engag'd in this happy Covenant: We were then devoted to thee, and were admitted thereupon to a right to all thy Favour and Mercy to Sinners: And for this thy unspeakable goodness to us we do give thee most hearty thanks. And in a deep fense of thy Favour herein, We lament O Lord, and we condemn our selves for that we have not lived answerably to it: Alas in many Instances have we broken thy Covenant, and follow'd and obey'd the Lusts of the Flesh, and Temptations of the Devil, and the corrupt Customs and Practices of the World. We have too frequently done those things which we ought not to have done. And to our shame we must confess too, that we have left undone those things which we ought to have done. For we have been negligent of Divine Knowledge, we have not received the Doctrines of the Gospel with that Love and Submission which we ought to have done, nor suffer'd them to have such Influence upon us as they are worthy to have. Most wretchedly we must confess we have slighted, and forsaken, and broken thy Holy Laws, which are in all things just and good. We must own, that we have hereby rendered our selves utterly unworthy of thy Favour and Mercy: But, O Lord, we are told, that to the Lord our God belong Mercy and Forgivenes, tho we have rebell'd against thee. O Father of Mercies forgive us we pray thee all that is past; and accept of us who desire to return to thee: Let us we beseech thee

thee find favour with thee and live. We return to thee with full purpose of Soul, we heartily renew our Covenant with thee, and do desire that it may ever hereafter remain inviolate. O give us the Assistance of thy Grace, that we may duly keep it, and walk before thee in Righteousness and Holiness all our days, and so may be partakers of thy abundant Mercy and Truth:

Visit we humbly pray thee with the saving Light of thy Gospel, the dark corners of the World, let the works of the Devil be there destroyed, and the wretched Creatures turn'd from the Power of Satan unto God. Grant thy Church to flourish in all Grace and to abound in every good Work; and in thy due time Redeem *Israel*, O God, out of all his troubles. We pray thee bless the Nations to which we belong, with a long continuance of thy Gospel in Power and Purity amongst us, and make us to bring forth answerable Fruit to thy Glory, and our own Peace and Happiness. We pray thee let our King enjoy thy peculiar Favour: Make him a Glorious and Successful Defender of thy Faith and True Religion, and help Him so to profess and obey it Himself, as may be to His everlasting Salvation: That He may at last change His Earthly Crown for a brighter Heavenly one. Bless the Royal Family with a great Encrease, prosper it with all Happiness, and let it be always Instrumental to ours. Be Gracious to all our Natural Relations: Oh let thy Grace make them steadfast in the Duties of their Covenant with thee, that they may be Partakers of thy Everlasting Mercies. We yeild thee humble thanks for the Mercies of this Day, especially for the means of Grace, and all the good Impressions they have made upon us: Grant that it may abide for ever, and bring forth much good Fruit. We humbly commit our selves to thy Protection this Night, and we beseech thee accept us and all our Services which we offer to thee in the Name of Jesus Christ the Righteous: In whose Name and Words we further pray, saying,

Our Father, &c.

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Let us Pray.

PRevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1 Cor. 11. 26.

For as often as ye Eat this Bread, and Drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come.

There is very apparent in Man a wonderful disagreement with himself: Which plainly shews, that he is not now in his truly Natural and Original State; For he could never

ver come such as he is, from the Hands of a Wise and Good Creator.

For an Instance of this we may take notice, That he is strongly addicted to Religion, in somuch that he is hardly able, even when he sets himself to endeavour this, to satisfie himself altogether to neglect it; something of Religion he must needs practice: But yet in all his Applications to the Services of it, he is so careleſſ and negligent, so flight and formal, that he seems as it were drag'd to it; and it looks like a meer violence and imposition upon his Nature to do any thing it requires. We may observe the Apostle *Paul* in this Chapter charging the Church of *Corinth*, with such a negligent and formal Application to their Religion; and that in the most solemn and chief Act of it, their Celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The outward performance and shew of this Sacrament they kept up in their Assemblies; But, as they join'd with it their common Love Feasts, so they seem to have done by it as we too commonly do by the other Sacrament of Bapt' n, that is, let the Feast and Entertainment which attended it divert them from the true nature and design of it, and so from that wherein the Religion of Celebrating it does chiefly consist. They met indeed to eat Bread and drink Wine, but they did not discern the Lord's Body in doing this; they did not duly attend to, or regard the true Nature and Signification of this Action. To rectifie this disorder the Apostle puts them in mind, in ver 24, 25. That our Saviour when

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when he instituted this Sacrament, intended, that it should serve for a Memorial of his Death: And in this 26th Verse, he tells them it was appointed for this purpose, That *as oft as they did eat this Bread and drink this Cup, they should shew the Lord's Death till he comes.*

In speaking to these words, I shall endeavour to promote that design for which they were sent to the Church of *Corinth*; that is, the right understanding and due celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And this appears necessary to be endeavour'd in our time, by the too common neglect, and the careless celebration of this Sacrament amongst us. To this purpose I shall insist upon these four Heads of Discourse.

1. To give the Import of these words of the Apostle, that we may understand the Nature and Design of this Sacrament so far as it is signified in them.

2. I shall shew, what that Consideration or Notion of this Sacrament does intimate and suggest to us to be understood, and acknowledged by us in the Celebration of it.

3. I shall intimate from thence, with what Disposition of Mind we should Celebrate it.

4. I shall deduce some Arguments from thence also, to persuade Men to come to this Sacrament as frequently as they can.

In the first place, I shall shew you the Import of the Apostle's words here, concerning the Lord's Supper: He says, That in this, according to institution, we *do shew the Lord's Death*. The word here, render'd to *shew*, is else-

elsewhere render'd to *declare*, and sometimes it is applied to the Preaching of the Gospel. It is well enough render'd here, if we add but one word more, to make the sence of the Translation equal with that of the Original : We may say then, this Sacrament is intended, to *shew forth* the Lord's Death : to make a solemn and lively representation of this. And this signifies something more than a bare commemoration or remembrance of his Death : It signifies the acting over again, as it were, the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and the representing or setting this before God the Father, as a means to find favour with him. As the Fathers of the World and the Jewish Nation were directed to represent this only Propitiatory Sacrifice, the Death of Christ upon the Cross, by their Offerings for Sin, so the Christian Church is directed to represent it still by the celebration of this Sacrament : We must not say, with some in the Church of Rome, that Christ is *personally* offer'd by us in this Sacrament, but that he is *representatively* offer'd herein. This Sacrament is not a true, real and propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin, but a lively Representation of such a Sacrifice. That it does represent the Death of Christ on the Cross, the Apostle further intimates, in Gal. 3. 1. where he says to the *Galatians*, That *Jesus Christ had before their eyes been evidently set forth crucified among them* : which can only mean, that this had been represented among them in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This Sacrament then we may call the Christian

stian Sacrifice, as the ancient Fathers of the Church were wont to do. A Divine of our own says, The ancient Fathers used to call the the Lord's Supper, a Sacrifice, because it is a Commemoration and also a Representation to God the Father, of Christ offer'd upon the Cross, (*Perkins Demonstr. Probl. tit. de Sacr. Missæ.*) Another says, (*Mede*) This Sacrament is not a bare remembrance or putting our selves only in mind of the Death of Christ, but a representing this to God. For every Sacrifice (says he) is directed to God; and the Oblation therein, of whatsoever it be, is made to God, and has him for its Object. And by this Sacrament we represent the Blessed Passion of our Lord to the Father, setting before him the Monuments thereof. And he produces, besides other Testimonies out of the Ancients, an Expression of *Justin Martyr* (*Dialog. cum Tryph.*) to this purpose: Who says, there is a two-fold Commemoration made in the Eucharist; The First is of our Food, dry, and liquid, by acknowledging God the Creator and Giver thereof; The Second is of the Passion of Christ the Son of God: Now the First of these is made to God (says he) therefore the Second is. The Celebration then of this Supper is the Worshiping of God by a Sacrifice still, and this is to continue to the end of the World, for the Apostle says, We must thus *shew the Lord's Death till he comes.* Thus we see the Import of the Apostle's Words is this, That the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper does represent, and as it were repeat the Sacrifice of the Death

Death of Christ, offering it up to God the Father. This, by his appointment, his Ministers do thus on Earth ; while he as a Priest for ever offers it in Heaven for us.

I come now in the Second place, to shew what this Notion of this Sacrament does intimate and suggest to us to be understood, and acknowledged by us when we Celebrate it. Which will be to shew, what this way of Worshiping God by a Sacrifice for Sin, does signify and mean : What he expects we should understand and acknowledge in our approaches to him, and does herein signify and intimate, that he expects such things, when he directs Mankind to Worship him by Sacrifices. This Sacrament then, as it is a Representation of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ ; does intimate and signify these four things, as all Sacrifices for Sin did :

1. That we are guilty before God, and deserving only of Wrath and Punishment from him.
2. That we are not to expect any favour from him, if the Honour of his Law and Authority be not repaired by some suffering for Sin.
3. That yet the Divine Compassion to our sad case, allows the tranferring of our Guilt on something else, even to Jesus Christ, who is the Offering and Sacrifice for it.
4. That the Offering and Sacrifice which we make to God, is allow'd and accounted to Suffer in our stead, and the Death and Destruction of that, does excuse us from Death and Destruction.

All these things are implied in such a way of Worship, and must be understood and attended to by him, that understands what he does, and minds the true nature and design of his Worship: These things then we must understand and consider in Celebrating the Lord's Supper, that we may therein rightly and truly discern the Lord's Body. I shall speak to each of these in order.

I. When God requires Men to Worship him by such Sacrifices, as are destroy'd upon their being offer'd to him, he signifies, that we ought, when we come before him, to acknowledge our selves guilty, and deserving of Wrath and Punishment. We must bring what we offer to God, as a forfeited thing, as that which we have lost all Right to, and therefore do restore it to the Grand Owner and Lord of all things. And when the thing is destroy'd which we offer to God, this signifies what the offerer deserves: It comes to Death and Destruction as an accursed thing being reckon'd so for his sake who brings it; and so an accursed and a devoted thing may be the same. However the way of Worshiping by Sacrifices was performed before God chose the *Jews* for his peculiar People, we shall find that he directed them to perform it with such Rites, as plainly signified and represented all these things which have been mention'd. In particular he directed an acknowledgment of Guilt to be made with these Sacrifices, as appears in *Lev. 5. 5.* which Scripture, the Jewish Doctors understand, as requiring a Confession of Sins to be

be made with every Sacrifice for Sin. Therefore one of them says (*Maimon in Outr.*) unless the Offerers practice Repentance, and make a Confession of their Sin in express words, they are not purged by their Sacrifices ; for it is said in *Lev. 5. 5.* *He shall confess that wherein he hath sinned.* When a Sinner comes to Worship God, he must come before him as such, with humble and self-abasing acknowledgments of his Guilt. This acknowledgment also we ought to make when we Celebrate the Lord's Supper ; as the Apostle plainly signifies in this Discourse: For he requires Men to examine themselves before they come to it ; which he appoints without doubt for this reason, that they may find out what Sins they are guilty of, and may confess them before God : And he also bids Men Judge themselves, that they may not be judged of the Lord: We represent in this Sacrament the Death of our Offering; therefore to do this rightly we must join with it an acknowledgment of Sin, and of the desert of Punishment.

2. In all Sacrifices there is intimated, and therefore must be acknowledged at this Sacrament, that we are not to expect any Favour from God, unless some satisfaction be made to the Authority of God, which is affronted in our sin. This is evidently signified in that the Offering was brought to be kill'd and destroy'd in order to the Offerers finding favour with God. He is a good and benign Being, and does not delight in the destruction of Creatures that he has made : He does not require, nor is pleased

with it for it self: But as he is Judge and Govenour of the World, and injur'd and affronted by the sins of Men, so it is become necessary to the maintaining his Authority and Honour, that there be some Punishment inflicted for Sin.

And this is that which is intimated in the Death of Sacrifices, That *without Blood there is no remission*, as the Apostle plainly teaches, *Heb. 9. 22.* which he shews also in the following Discourse to be signified by the Death of Christ. When we celebrate this Sacrament therefore, which is a representation of his Death, we must consider and acknowledge, that there is no Peace with God to be expected by Sinners; no Pardon to be obtain'd unless his Honour and Authority be secur'd by some suffering for Sin. That as a Wise Govenour of the World, he will not give an easie and cheap Pardon, lest his Government should be despised, and he should encourage Men to transgres. And as infinitely offended by the sins of Men, he would not permit his well-beloved Son to obtain the Pardon of them without dying and suffering some penalty for them.

3. In all Sacrifices for Sin there was intimated, and to be understood a transferring of Guilt from the Offerer to his Sacrifice; that it was communicated to the Sacrifice, and remov'd from the Offerer. There was such a Rite as this appointed; the Person who offer'd laid his hands upon the head of his Offering while he confess his Sins. This was done by the direction of God himself. It was order'd to be done by particular Persons when they offer'd,

Levit.

Levit. 1. 4. and elsewhere. In Offerings for all the People, some of the Chief of them did this as Representatives of the rest. In some Cases the High Priest laid his Hands upon the Offering, as a Representative of all the People, as we see particularly, *Levit. 16. 21.* And the meaning and signification of this Rite is there express'd to be this transferring of Guilt; for 'tis said that in doing this, He did *put their transgressions and sins upon the head of that* whereon he had laid his Hands while he confess'd them. That there was herein a guilt communicated to the Offering, appears in this, that he who led the Scape-Goat into the Wilderness after this confession of the Peoples Sins over him, was reckon'd defiled by the Beast, and was order'd to wash his Clothes, and bathe himself before he might return among the People. And he also who carried the Beast that was slain, after such confession over it, to be burnt without the Camp was accounted defiled by that: These things we may see, *Levit. 16. 26, 28.* And that the guilt was remov'd, as well as communicated, from the Offerer to the Offering, appears, in that the slain Beast was carried away out of the Camp to be burnt; and it is expressly said of the Scape-Goat, who was to be let go alive into the Wilderness; That he should *bear away upon him the Iniquity of the Children of Israel to a Land not inhabited,* *Levit. 16. 22.* This then is that which we must understand and acknowledge concerning Jesus Christ at this Sacrament, That the sins of Mankind were transferr'd upon this our great

Sacrifice: And thus much the Scripture plainly tells us of him. For it says, *He bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree*, that is on the Crois, 1 Pet. 2. 24. The Prophet also says of him, *God hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all*, Isa. 53. 6. because this was then unalterably determined, that he should bear the sins of Men, and it was operative even then to the Salvation of Good Men, tho' Christ was not then come in the Flesh. Again, 'tis said, *He was made sin for us who knew no sin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *And he was offer'd to bear the sins of many*, Heb. 9. 23. which things plainly express and shew, the transferring or imputation of the sins of Mankind to Jesus Christ, our great and only true propitiatory Sacrifice.

4. In all Sacrifices for sin, there was intimated, and might be understood the transferring of the Punishment due from the Offerer to the Sacrifice: So as that the Sacrifice suffer'd what was due to the Sinner, and suffer'd instead of the Sinner, to excuse him from suffering. When the Blood of the Sacrifice was sprinkled on the Altar, or brought into the most Holy Place, it was offer'd to God, being the Life of the Creature Sacrificed, instead of the forfeited Life of the Offerer. And the Blood wherein is the Life of an Animal, as the Scripture speaks, being thus reserv'd to God to make atonement for sin, it was not permitted to any to eat the Blood of any Creature whilst that way of Worship lasted, and for that reason; but when that way of Worship is abolish'd, and the reason of that abstinence is remov'd, then is it no longer unlawful

lawful to eat the Blood, this by the Way. It is said in *Levit.* 17. 11. That the Blood of the Sacrifice was to be shed, and put upon the Altar to make an atonement for their Souls: And 'tis repeated again, that 'tis the Blood which maketh an Atonement for the Soul. Now to atone for the Soul is to atone for the Life; which can mean no less than to excuse the forfeiture of it, to save the Life of the Offerer; and so the Life of the Sacrifice was evidently offer'd instead of that. To be or make an atonement for the Soul, and to be its Ransom, is the same thing in Scripture, as we may see, in *Exod.* 30. by comparing the 12th. with the 15th. and 16th. verses. And the Jews themselves understood thus of this matter: For at the end of that Confession of sins which they made, with their Hands upon the Head of the Sacrifice, we are told they added these words, *And let this be my Expiation or Atonement.* Which words they themselves explain thus; Let this Victim be substituted in my place and stead, so that the Evil I have deserv'd may fall upon the Head of my Sacrifice. (*Outr. de sacr.* p. 170.)

As this was intimated in the Sacrifices of the Jews, so it is that which the Scripture plainly says of the Death of Jesus Christ, That he suffer'd Death for us, as our desert, and to excuse us thereby from suffering. A multitude of places speak this, I shall mention but some of them, in *Mat.* 20. 28. He says of himself, *He came to give his life a ransom for many.* And *He suffer'd for our sins,* says the Apostle, *1 Pet.* 1. 18. The Prophet says, *He* was

was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed, Isa. 53. 5. which plainly speaks his suffering in our stead. This, then, is what we are to understand and consider of his Death at the Celebration of this Sacrament. And that we are to do so, is plainly signified in the very words our Saviour used at the Institution of it: For of the Bread, he said, *This is my Body which is given for you*, as St. Luke represents it, Luke 22. 19. which is broken for you, as St. Paul represents it, in 1 Cor. 11. 24. And of the Wine he said, *This is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins*, Mat. 26. 28. Thus much I think may suffice to shew, what is intimated and signified in the representation of the Death of Christ in the Sacrament, and what we are to attend to, and consider in the Celebration of it.

I come now in the Third place, to suggest and gather from hence with what disposition of mind we ought to celebrate this Representation of the Death of Christ. And this is so evidently suggested in what has been said, that I need not insist long upon it. With what temper and disposition of mind does it become us to acknowledge our selves sinners before God, but with a hearty Sorrow, and unfeigned Repentance for our Sins? It should grieve us certainly when we consider, that we have offer'd affront and dishonour to the Great God who is the Author of our Being, and the Fountain of all that Good which we enjoy.

enjoy. And it should grieve us to think how much grief and pain it has cost our Redeemer, to purchase the Pardon of our Sins. It should possess us with a very great fence of the Evil of Sin, to see herein represented, how odious and offensive it is to the Pure and Holy God, and how great a displeasure he has conceived against it. Herein we may learn, it is not so small a matter to sin against God, as we commonly account it; that he does not make a light matter of it; that he will not pardon it without some Testimony of his Displeasure against it: And thought it not for his Honour to accept a less Sacrifice, than the Blood and Death of his Son in our Nature: And this should possess us with an earnest hatred and detestation of all Sin and Wickedness. And, then, as being truly fallen out with it, we must make strong and stedfast resolutions to forsake our Sins for the future.

Again, Because this Representation of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, puts us in mind of a Remedy, as well as of our Disease, and of an Atonement for Sin as well as of our Sin: We may therefore raise our Hopes thereby in the Mercy of God through Jesus Christ. We may believe and rely upon the Sufficiency of this Sacrifice for Sin, be assur'd of its acceptance with the Father, and with an humble boldness represent it to him to find favour with him: We may ask and hope for the Pardon of our Sins, the Sanctifying Influences of the Holy Spirit, and an Interest in the Kingdom of Heaven. We may upon the account of this Sacrifice,

Sacrifice, ask and expect the most valuable, and the most important Blessings. And thus we are to exercise our Faith in God.

And when we consider the depth of Misery into which we were plunged by our Sin, and from which we are redeem'd by the Death of Christ. This should affect our hearts with the highest thankfulness to him ; who pitied us in our guilty State ; who helped us in our helpless Condition, who gave himself to die, that he might purchase Eternal Life for us. It should kindle a most ardent and prevailing Love in us to him to consider, that he lov'd us, and gave himself for us ! That he lov'd us freely, and redeem'd us at so great a cost to himself. It should make us devote our selves to serve him, and present our selves ^{as} a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice to him. Ready to do all things he commands, and to deny our selves to Please and Honour him. And then, in Obedience to his Commands, and in Conformity to his free Universal Love, we must be in Charity with all Men ; we should be ready to do good, far from seeking to do any Evil to our Neighbour, and easie to forgive those that injure us. It is very evident, that this is the Temper and Disposition of Mind, which is suitable and becoming us in the Celebration of this Sacrament.

I shall now in the last place urge Men from this Notion or Consideration of this Sacrament, to attend upon it, and use it as frequently as they can. And the foregoing Discourse seems to afford us very easily the Three following Arguments to this Purpose.

1. That

1. That this Instance and Way of Worship is most exactly suitable to the State of the Case between God and us, and therefore very likely, if duly performed, to be acceptable with him. If we are at all concern'd to Worship, we must be concern'd to offer that sort of Worship, which is likely to be most pleasing to Almighty God: And if this be peculiarly suitable to him and us, we cannot think of any that can be so acceptable with him as this.

Now 'tis very easie to see, if we look back upon what has been said, that this is mightily suitable to our Case, since we are all become Sinners before God: What can be so suitable and fitting, as to own that we have forfeited all the Good that we enjoy, to bring him a part of it as a Confession of this? How should we approach the great offended God, but in the most humble and abject manner? Owning that we deserve Death and Destruction: Depending, and declaring that we do depend upon the Atonement of a Sacrifice, and the Intercession of a Priest and Mediator to find Favour with him: And presenting to him such a Sacrifice as he has declar'd himself well pleased with. Thus we own, and we duly Honour his just Displeasure against our Sins: We Honour his Holiness and Justice, tho we have before affronted both by our sins: And certainly 'tis very requisite, that some amends, as we may say, should be made him for this, before we should be so bold as to ask any Favours from him: And therefore that

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we should offer and represent to him a valuable and worthy Sacrifice : Without this, most certainly we are not worthy to appear before him. It were such presumption to expect to be Accepted, or find Favour with him, that it were an new affront and injury, and would deserve and might procure greater Wrath and Displeasure against us.

2. We may consider farther, that this, as most suitable to our Case, has been the Way of Worship required and approved of God, and practised by all Good Men in all Ages. Thus the Fathers of the World, without doubt by God's own direction Worship'd him. And when he chose the *Jews* to be his peculiar People, as the Ancestors of their Nation had Worshiped him in this way, so he set them in the same way of Worship ; and he polish'd and adorn'd it with many Rites and Ceremonies, which also intimated to them the Reason and Significations of this way. So that this may be reckon'd the Religion of the World, of all the right Worshipers of the True God ; a way of Worship, as Catholick or Universal as Worship it self. We may justly think, there is something very considerable in this ; in that 'tis so steadily and constantly required by Almighty God. It appears very steadily requir'd, when it was practiced by his Direction from the beginning of the World ; and is commanded in this way to be continued to the end of it. The Christian Church is not allow'd to approach God, without the representation of a Sacrifice for Sin,

Sin, even the same which was represented by all the Sacrifices of Ancient times ; but we are favour'd to do this in a much more easie and more pleasant way : And this obliges us the rather to continue stedfast in this Worship, that 'tis now made more easie to us, than it was before the coming of our Saviour. The constancy of former times in their costly, labourious and troublesome Sacrifices, will be a condemnation of us in our great neglect of this so easie a Duty.

And if we should quite forsake and lay aside this way of Worshiping God, as some pretended Christians among us do, we should forsake the good Old Way which all the Saints now in Heaven have gone before us in ; We should separate our selves from all the Right Worshipers of the True God, that have ever been, and become Schismaticks from the most Catholick Church. And certainly a Man might very justly suspect the Light within him to be meer Darkness, when it directs him to do so contrary to the Command of the Holy Spirit by the Apostle, which is, that we should thus shew forth the Death of Christ *till his coming again.*

Lastly, By what has been said, I think we have reason to conclude ; That this is absolutely necessary, and of great use to give acceptance and success to our Prayers. We may justly fear, that no other Worship will be of any avail to us without it ; and this may be another Argument to move us as constantly to attend this as we can. When God has

has appointed this, we cannot reasonably expect, that he will ever hear our Prayers if we neglect it. To do thus is to live in Sin, in a guilty Omission of what he requires, and then surely we shall be in danger to have our Prayers rejected. If we live in Sin we are not fit for the forgiveness of our Sins ; if they are not forgiven, they are crying to Heaven against us for vengeance, and will hinder our Prayers from being heard with God, and obstruct the way of Mercy towards us. But the joyning this Sacrament with our Prayers will be highly useful to us, and be very likely to give them the success we desire. The necessity and usefulness of this way of Worship to give success to Prayers, has been understood by all the Old Worshipers of God before the coming of Christ ; who therefore joyn'd it to their Prayers to recommend and help them. Hence it is, that when we read of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* calling upon God, we read of their Building Altars too, and offering Sacrifices. Hence it was, that *Saul* when he was afraid the *Philistines* would come upon him before he had made his Prayers for good success, forced himself to offer a Burnt-offering, as he says, *1 Sam. 13. 12.* This also is signified and shewn very evidently, in that of *Ezra. 6. 10.* where 'tis said, the King of *Persia* had decreed the restoring of the Temple Worship ; that the *Jews* might offer Sacrifices of sweet favour to the God of Heaven, and pray for the Life of the King and his Sons. And what these Old Worshipers thought of their Sacrifices,

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the same Opinion had the Pious and Learned Worshippers, since the coming of Christ concerning this Sacrament. We find in several of them (*Mede*) that they thought this necessary and useful to give success to their Prayers: Therefore after the Bread and Wine had been Consecrated by Prayer, to represent the Body and Blood of Christ, then they made their most important requests to God, pleading in virtue of that Sacrifice which they then represented; then also they remember'd all those whom they reckon'd themselves bound to pray for; and they did it with these words, *We offer unto thee for such and such*: Which was as much as to say, We beseech thee for the sake of that Sacrifice, now represented before thee, to hear our Prayers. But now, If God has appointed, and good Men have been wont to add this to their Prayers, How can we expect to succeed without it? The *Jews* might not Sacrifice but in the Temple, but they had places of Assembling for Prayers in divers part of the Nation; and their daily Prayers were recommended and assisted by the daily whole Burnt-Offerings at the Temple: And when any particular Person had any extraordinary and particular request, he recommended it to God with an extraordinary and particular Sacrifice. The first Christians we find as constantly met together to *break Bread* as to Pray, and made the Celebration of this Sacrament, as constant a part of the Publick Worship as any other. It were heartily to be wish'd, that our People were so generally possest with their Duty

in this case, as that we might have this Sacra-
ment Celebrated every Lord's Day, as our
Church has provided it should be in every
Congregation. I cannot chuse but think, that
we might hope to pray with the better success,
and hear Sermons with the more advantage, if
we did this too. Since our Lord has required
this as a part of our Worship, our Worship
must be defective without it; and then the
rest is not likely to be so much blest to us,
as if we perform'd his Will in using this too. I
think we may justly look upon this as the chief
part of our Worship, as that which gives most
Honour to God, and will be of greatest ad-
vantage to us; and then we ought to endea-
vour to be constantly fit for it, and to come
to it as often as we have opportunity to do so
in the Congregation, where Order and Obedi-
ence do require us to joyn in Worship: Let us
consider, that if there be any temporal Mercy
greatly necessary to us, this is the best way to
obtain it: If we need the strengthening and
confirming any Grace and Virtue in us; if we
desire to be deliver'd out of strong temptation,
out of any grievous Affliction, this is the best
and likeliest way to obtain it. And if ever we
have for any time pray'd for any mercy truly
necessary to us, and have not yet receiv'd it;
I believe there is no Man has done this, but
what may accuse himself of not coming to this
Sacrament, with serious preparation so often
as he might. This then let us all resolve to do
for the future, that we may be Partakers of
the Divine Goodness.

Now

Now to him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father: To him with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be Glory and Dominion for ever, and ever. Amen.

THE PRAYER.

INfinite and Eternal God! The Author of our Being, and Lord of all Things. Thou art he to whom we owe the Homage and Obedience of Creatures; and the thankful Acknowledgment, that we derive all that we have and are from thee: We ought, O Lord, to shew forth thy Praise, not only with our Lips but in our Lives; by giving up our selves intirely to thy service, making that our main business and concern in the World, and walking before thee in Righteousness and Holiness all our days. But alas, how sadly have we forgotten this our Duty! How greatly have we contradicted it; and how much have we fallen short of the Honour and Glory we ought to have paid. Lord we are ashamed, we abhor our selves at the remembrance of our Sins; we own that we have provoked thy most just Wrath and Indignation against us: That we are less than the least of all thy Mercies; have forfeited all which we have, and render'd our selves utterly unworthy to ask what we want. In this deplorable case we had been destitute of all Hope, if thy Wisdom and Compassion had not allow'd, and appointed us a Mediator: So that we have now an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our Sins. Oh we thank thee

with all our hearts, for thine Inestimable Love in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ. And we hope, that having so loved us, as to give thine only begotten Son to die a Sacrifice for our Sins. Thou wilt not deny us any thing that is necessary to our Salvation. Behold and regard we pray thee thy Sons precious Blood ; accept of his Death instead of ours ; on that we rely : Oh let it always be interposed between us and thy just Displeasure. Upon the account of that, we beseech thee, Pardon all our Sins : Purge us with Hysop and we shall be clean ; wash and sprinkle us with that Blood, and we shall be whiter than Snow. Teach us, that denying all ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we may live Soberly, and Righteously, and Godly in this present World. Inable us by thy Grace to die unto Sin, and live unto Righteousness : Grant that through the Holy Spirit dwelling and ruling in us, we may mortifie the Deeds of the Body, and live a Holy Life, keeping a Conscience void of Offence both towards God and towards Men. We pray thee O Lord, lift up the light of thy Countenance upon us ; satisfie us early with thy Mercy ; let us know that thou art reconcil'd, and that we are receiv'd into Favour with thee ; so shall we rejoyce and be glad all our Days ; for thy loving kindnes O Lord is better than Life. Bestow upon us according to thy Wisdom and Mercy, what thou seest most needful and convenient for us of the good things of this World ; that we may to the more purpose live to thy Glory here, and may be assisted in working out our own Salvation.

We humbly remember before thee thy Son's precious Death in the behalf of Mankind ; praying that the Earth may be fill'd with a saving Knowledge of the Lord as Waters cover the Sea. We humbly pray for the Welfare and Prosperity of thy Church ; give it every where Peace, and a great Encrease of all Grace and Virtue. Be Gracious to the Land of our Native, Pardon all our Sins, and let not our Iniquities withhold good things from us. Continue thy Word and

and Sacraments in the pure Administrations of them among us ; make us diligently to attend them, and let thy Blessing make them always very profitable to the promoting of our Grace, and Comfort, and Salvation. We recommend to thy peculiar Favour our most Gracious King: Give him long Health and Life, encrease of Riches and Honour, and great success in his Endeavours to promote thy Glory, and our Happiness, as thou hast given Him a great desire to do both. Bless and prosper the Royal Family ; let it continue for ever, and for ever be great a Blessing to these Nations. We pray for those that Minister in Holy Things, that they may be fill'd with true Wisdom ; may despise the Temptations of this World, may be excellent Examples of Piety and Virtue ; and save themselves ,and those committed to their Charge. We pray for all our Natural Relations ; be thou a Father and a Friend to them ; make them to Love, Fear and Honour thee, and diligently to live after thy Commandments, and do thou delight in them to do them Good. We give thanks for the Mercies of this Day, for thy Blessed Ordinances, and all the happy Influences of them : Let us live under such Influence all our days. Be thou our protection in the Night, the guide of our Ways, the end of our Race, and our Portion for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*O*UR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil : For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, *Amen.*

T H E
 Right Hearing
 O F T H E
 Word of God for our Profit,
 Stated and Urg'd.

Let us Pray.

PRevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help; that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I Cor. 1. 21. Latter part.

It pleased God by the foolishness of Preaching to save them that Believe.

THE Declaration of the Revealed Will of God concerning the way of our Salvation, by Messengers appointed and call'd by himself to that Office, is that which the Apostle means by Preaching in the Text: This was the effectual

al and prevailing means which Converted once, almost the whole World to the Christian Faith and Practice. It prevail'd against settled and inveterate Prejudices : It drove away before it false Religions which had long obtain'd and been reverenced in the World ; It demolish'd the most stately Temples of false Gods, and erected Glorious Churches to the true One : It brought ador'd Idols to be trampled under feet, and set up the just Adoration and Worship of the Despised, and Crucified Jesus. It prevail'd against the darling Lusts and Vices of Men, and effected a Glorious Reformation of Manners, at a time of Universal Corruption in the World. The first attempt of it after our Saviour's Ascension into Heaven, being made upon those who had Persecuted and Crucified him, so well succeeded, that it gain'd at once Three Thousand Converts to his Religion from amongst his most Malicious Enemies.

Such mighty Effects has this Ordinance formerly had, which now seems so weak, and is commonly so fruitless a thing : How few alas are now turn'd by it from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God. Men continue to follow their beloved sins, and many remain under a fatal and shameful ignorance of Divine Things ; notwithstanding, that the Providence of God favours us with much, and very excellent Preaching ! How frequent reason, alas, have those who Administer it now to complain as the Prophet does of the Jews, *Who has believ'd our report, and to whom*

is the Arm of the Lord revealed. It has now so little Effect commonly, as if he that makes nothing in vain had yet in vain appointed this.

In this unhappy condition of our Times, it would certainly be the most useful and profitable Performance, to find out the common Causes of this Mischief, and to propose proper and fit Remedies, and Antidotes against them. This is the important Attempt which I design at present: God grant I may make it with good success.

In speaking to this Subject, I shall follow this method of Discourse. I shall in the first Place observe, what intimations concerning Preaching the Word of God this Text affords us: Which are such as I reckon are fit to cure and remove the common Causes of the unsuccesfullness of it: And I shall apply each of them severally to the purposes it is fit to serve for, and to the removal of those Causes of this which it does most directly oppose. And this will be the greatest part of the Discourse: But I shall briefly employ the latter end of it, to urge Men to a great concern and endeavour, that they may receive benefit by this means of Grace and Salvation.

Now the Intimations concerning Preaching the Word of God, which our Text affords us, are these Three.

1. That it is a Divine Ordinance, and Institution.

2. That the true End, and proper Design of it is to promote the Salvation of Mankind.

3. That

3. That the Efficacy and Effect of it is entirely due to the Blessing of God upon our serious, and careful use of it. These I shall severally confirm, and apply them in their order.

I begin with the First ; That Preaching the Word and Will of God to Men, is an Ordinance of his own Appointment ; this we find intimated in the Text ; For it is there said, That his Messengers had taken this Course to bring Mankind into the right way of Salvation and Happiness : They who brought along with them the Evidence of Miracles to justifie what they did, and thereby prov'd, that they were directed and owned in it by Almighty God. And we may the rather allow this to be intimated in the Text, because we have it very evidently and exprely taught us in other Places of Holy Scripture. As our Lord himself began in this way to propagate the Doctrines of the Gospel, so he left behind him an Order of Men Commission'd, and set apart to carry on the same Work in the same way : And he inabled and furnish'd them to perform it in a Miraculous manner. They were immediately Inspired with Knowledge by the Holy Ghost, and had the Gift of Speaking all Languages, that they might the more readily every where Communicate that Knowledge. He gives them Command to Preach the saving Doctrines of the Gospel, as we may see, *Mark 16. 15. Go ye into all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature.* And they tell us, that, upon his Resurrection, he commanded them to

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to Preach to the World, and testifie those things which Men were to believe concerning him, *Acts 10. 42.*

I may farther add, because our Times require it, That this is an Ordinance of God, which the Holy Scripture sufficiently intimates, is intended by him, to continue in his Church to the end of the World. It might justly dispose Men to believe this, That we do so evidently find it appointed by God, but do no where in Scripture find that the use of it is limited to a shorter date of time: And it may very well be accounted an arrogant presumption to set limits to this, when God has set none. But moreover we find, that the Apostles who were immediately directed by the Holy Ghost, did plainly intend, that Preaching should continue after their times, in that they committed the Office to others whom they Ordain'd, and set apart to the discharge of it. And it appears, they intended, that those whom they Ordain'd, should some of them Ordain others to the same Office, that it might be continued after them: Therefore the Apostle *Paul* directs those, who had Authority to Ordain in the Persons of *Timothy* and *Titus*, what sort of Persons they ought to commit that Sacred and Venerable Office to. An Ancient Bishop in the Church, who liv'd with the Apostles, and is mention'd by St. *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Philippians* (*Phil. 4. 3.*) Writes thus of this matter: The Apostles (says he) appointed Bishops and Ministers over such as should afterwards believe, out of those who were the First Fruits of their

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Conversions. (*Clemens Rom. 1. Ep. ad Corinth.*) From whence we may observe, that this Office was to be continued and exercised in the Church, and was not only intended, as some would have us believe, to convert the Heathens and gather them into the Church: But to put this matter beyond dispute, we may observe, that our Saviour himself gives us ground to conclude, that he intended this Office should continue, and this Work be carried on to the end of the World; in that he says, (*Matth. 28. 29.*) to those whom he had set apart for this purpose, *Lo, I am with you to the end of the World.* He could not mean, that they, in their persons, should continue to the end of the World, for they are long since dead; therefore he must be understood to mean, that their Office should continue, and this discharge of it be carried on to the end of the World: And he would be with those who should continue it, to give them good success in their Work, or support and comfort them under small success, if they were faithful and diligent in the discharge of their Duty. And thus, I think, is this first Intimation sufficiently prov'd: Let us now see what Use we ought to make of it, and what Causes of the present Unsuccessfulness of Preaching it may and ought to remove.

1. And, in the first place, it may suggest to us, that we must not expect to be taught of God, without the use of this Ordinance, when he affords us the opportunities of using it. 'Tis a very groundless, and without doubt will prove

prove a deceitful presumption for any to expect, that the Spirit of God will teach them without this means of doing it, when the Spirit himself has appointed this to be the ordinary means of our instruction. We may see God himself deferring so much to this his own appointment, as to make it the ordinary means of converting Men to the true Religion, tho' he might have done it without such means: Of this we have several Instances in Scripture: He might have inspired the Apostles immediately with a belief of the true Messiah, and the Doctrines of the Gospel, but he possess'd them with this by the Preaching of Jesus Christ. He might have converted the Eunuch to Christianity, without the Preaching of the Evangelist *Philip*, by his reading alone the Prophesie of *Isaiah*; but he directed *Philip* to meet and preach to him: And he might, by the Angel that appear'd to *Cornelius*, have given him a sufficient knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the way of Salvation; but he directs him, by that Angel, to send for his Minister, *Peter*, that from his Preaching he might derive his necessary Information. 'Tis true, God can teach us without this Instrument and Means, but no where has he given us leave to expect, that he will do so: And we ought to be well assur'd, that he will do it, before we depend upon it.

2. We may learn and conclude from hence, That it is our Duty to give a diligent Attention to the Preaching of the Word of God. Since God has set up an Order of Men, to administer

minister this Ordinance in his Church, and requires them diligently to do so, it is most evidently included herein, that he requires the People to attend upon it. We must look upon it then as a Duty, that we do use, as often as we can, the Opportunities of Hearing the Word of God, at the times appointed for Publick Worship. It is not an indifferent Matter, or that which we are left at liberty to do or not do ; but it is a direct Sin against God, to allow our selves in a needless absence from it. We break his Laws in doing so ; and we break our own Solemn Vow and Covenant with God. We promised in our Baptism, *That we would keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of our Life.* He that neglects this Instance of Obedience, then, and, to indulge his Ease or Pleasure, does wilfully absent himself on the Lord's Day from this Ordinance, he does contradict, and virtually disown his Baptism ; he thus far throws off the true and proper Badge and Mark of a Christian, which is Obedience to the Commands of Christ, and bears the Name of a Christian but to his shame and sorcer condemnation.

3. This Truth requires further, That this Ordinance be always regarded and used with a great deal of Reverence. Men ought always to attend upon it with great Reverence and Seriousness, as being an Ordinance and Appointment of the great God, by whomsoever it is administred ; it is an Instance of Reverence to him to do so; and we are justly directed
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always to approach and worship him with reverence and godly fear, (Heb. 12 28) as that without which we cannot do this acceptably. Indeed this ought to have a great influence upon him who administers, and possess him with a very serious care and reverence himself, that he may do this so it as becomes the Oracles of God to be deliver'd, and as becomes the Ambassador of Heaven to deliver the Message of Heaven: But if the wretched ~~Man~~ forgets himself, and neglects to do his Work as he ought, this should not make the Hearers forget their Duty too. They may assure themselves, that his Sin will not, in the sight of God, excuse theirs: They should consider 'tis God whom they reverence in performing their Duty, not the mean Person who administers the Ordinance. *They* should consider they are in the presence of God, tho' *he* does not consider this as he ought; and that they are waiting for the greatest Favours from God in the way that he has appointed. And they may expect, that their Reverence of his Ordinance will be the more acceptable to him, and, by consequence, the more advantageous to themselves, when they pay this under such an unhappy Temptation to Irreverence, as they meet with when it is absurdly and irreverently administred.

I proceed now to the Second Intimation which we have in our present Text, concerning the Preaching of the Word of God, and that is this, That the True and Proper End and Design of God in appointing this Ordinance,

nance, is, to promote thereby the Salvation of Mankind. Our Text tells us, It pleased God to make use of this as a Means to that end and effect: And we are very evidently taught, that this is the main end and design of Preaching, according to God's appointment, in what our Saviour said to Saint *Paul*, at the time when he call'd him to this Office; which Saint *Paul* himself gives us this account of, *Act* 26. 18. *I will send thee* (said he to him) *to the Gentiles to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* In which words he plainly shews, that the end of Preaching, is, to infuse Divine Knowledge into the Minds of Men, to rescue them from Wicked Living, which is, to be under the Power of Satan, and to convert them to Holiness and Virtue, which is, to bring them to God: It is intended to beget in them such a Faith in Jesus Christ, as shall purifie their Hearts, and work by Divine Love: And this is to be done upon us, that we may be qualified for, and may attain the Remission of our Sins, and the Everlasting Happiness of Heaven. Thus we see plainly what is the Main End and Design of Preaching. Let us now suggest what Use ought to be made of this.

1. And, in the first place, it requires, That Men do propose it to themselves, as the Main End of their Attendance on this Ordinance, that they may be thereby advanced in the Way of

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of Salvation; We should desire and design, in Hearing, That our Hearts and Lives may be made better: That the Evil which is in us may be discover'd and purg'd away: That the Good which is wanting may be supplied, and that which is weak may be strengthened: That we may encrease in every Grace, and become more fit for Heaven. We should come to it hungring and thirsting after Righteousness, so we shall be filled, as our Saviour promises, *Marth. 5. 6.* And, as the Apostle directs, we should desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby. It is very probable, that one great Cause why Hearing the Word of God has now so little good effect, is, because Men do not propose to themselves the right and due End in their Hearing: Some come to Hear without any End at all, to fulfil a Custom, and do as their Neighbours do: Some come with Worldly or Evil Ends: Many do this only, that they may appear to Men to have some regard to Religion, and so may gain the better Credit in the World: Many Hear, that they may be able to talk, rather than that they may be directed to live well. And Men shew, that they are not sensible as they should be of the right Ends of this Ordinance in the Preaching, which they commonly most value and seek: They chuse rather, that the Preacher should insist upon those Points which they think tend to secure or promote their Worldly Interests, than upon such Discourse as would tend to cure their Inordinate Love of the World, and induce

duce them to set their Affections on things above: They had rather be entertain'd with Nice and Useless Speculations, than have their Hearts searched, their Vices discover'd, and their Consciences set on work to accuse and rebuke them till they forsake their Sins: And so strangely mistaken are some, that they would rather the Preacher should make ostentation of his own Wit and Learning, than that he should endeavour to perswade them to Piety and Virtue. And as Men propose to themselves such wrong ends in Hearing, they will, even in the greatest disorder, run after such Preaching as will gratifie their Humours, if they can any where find it; and so the Edification, which they commonly meet with, while they thus *heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears,* amounts but to this, That they are encouraged in their Faults, are confirm'd in their Errors, and have but their Damnation the more assur'd, by that which might be a means of their Salvation. As the Salvation of the Soul is, to a Wonder, the least Concern of most Men, so they mind this commonly the least of any thing in this Action, as well as in the rest of their Lives: And if but few come to hear the Word of God, that they may be saved, 'tis no wonder at all, if but few are promoted in their fitness for salvation by it: While Men propose to themselves none, or but wrong ends in hearing, it is to be expected, that they shall miss of attaining the right ends of it, and those good and happy effects which the goodness of God has appointed it for.

2. This requires further, That Men should hear the Word of God with serious application to themselves of what they hear : As we ought to propose the right end in hearing, so we should prosecute and endeavour the attainment of that end in the doing it : To which purpose we should very seriously examine our own Hearts and Lives, by what we hear, and apply it to our selves. Every hearer should reflect upon what he hears, and bring it home to his own Heart ; by considering with himself of what concernment it is to him ; what it requires him to be, or not to be ; what neglected Vertue it calls upon him to acquire and practice, or what indulg'd Vice and Error it requires him to forsake : And as a Man may always make some such good use of what he hears, as to admonish himself by it in what respects it is that he wants amendment or improvement, so he may promote the right end of his Hearing, the salvation of his Soul, even when the Preacher forgets to make this the main end of his Preaching. And here I may very seasonably insert a Caution against a very common Error which does frequently cheat Men of all the advantage which they might make of their hearing ; and that is, we should take care, that we do not let our selves apply what we hear, rather to our Neighbour than our selves. If Men think themselves reprov'd in what they hear, they are angry, and, for the most part, endeavour and are apt to think every thing that is condemned is in their Neighbours, and every thing that is commended

commended is in themselves: They can easier see their Neighbours Faults than their own, and spy a Mote in his Eye sooner than a Beam in their own. And thus they rather encrease in Hatred or Contempt of their Neighbour, by what they hear, than in their own Piety and Vertue.

And so much may suffice to be spoken to the Second Intimation in the Text. I now proceed to the Third, which I have said is this: That the Efficacy and good Effect of Preaching upon Men, is entirely due to the Blessing of God upon their serious and careful use of it. This our Text does very plainly suggest to us: The Apostle ascribes it to God, that the *Foolishness of Preaching* was able to bring Men to Faith and Salvation. And I might confirm this from many places of Scripture, but that one, because so full and express, shall suffice, which we have in *1 Cor. 3. 5, 6, 7.* where the Apostle designedly sets himself to teach the *Corinthians* this matter, who greatly needed to be possess'd with it. *Who is Paul*, (says he, speaking of himself) *and who is Apollos, or what are they, but Ministers by whom ye believed, as God gave to every Man?* They were but Ministers, but Servants to another, that is to God, in what had been done among them: They were the Instruments indeed of the Faith which the *Corinthians* had receiv'd; but he would have them know they were but Instruments, and the Faith which every Man had, was that which the Lord had given him. The Apostle adds therefore, in the 6th Verse,

I have Planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increase. And he fitly concludes from thence in the 7th verse, *So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth: but God that giveth the increase.* And this I think may suffice to confirm this Truth; I proceed therefore to shew what use we ought to make of it, and what cause of unsuccessful hearing it is fit to cure and remove. This matter I shall represent in the following Particulars.

1. We must not despair of receiving Benefit by a weak Instrument, nor despise the Preaching which the Providence of God, and the Order of the Church confines us to. A Man should not needlessly and voluntarily put himself into such a place, where he can enjoy none but such: And when a Parish are destitute of a Minister, they may make it their great Concern to be furnish'd with the best they can procure: But if it pleases God to dispose of any Persons unavoidably, where they must attend to one of small qualifications, and if the Order of the Church confines any People to such an one; They ought to submit and live orderly, and afford their Ordinary common attendance to his Administrations, endeavouring to make the best Improvement of him that they can. None are forbid an occasional attendance upon those who are better qualified; but the common and ordinary attendance of all Men, should be where the Order of the Church directs and confines them. And Men should consider in this case, that the Divine Power can work as effectually by weak means,

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as by the ablest: And we may observe the Apostle says in the Text, It had pleased God to bring many to Faith and Salvation even *by the foolishness of Preaching*: That is by that way of declaring the Doctrines of the Gospel which the World accounted foolishness: For the Preaching of the Gospel, as he intimates in this discourse, was at first perform'd in a naked, simple, and inartificial Declaration of Divine Truths; and this was Foolish to the Philosophers and Orators of the World, because it was not attended with the subtle Arguings of the one, nor with the Eloquence of the other: And tho' it was destitute of these admired Ornaments, these things which the World are apt to think such helps to its success, yet it prevail'd in the World, it made its way without them; and not only so, but it prevail'd against them too, while the Wisdom of the World in the disputes of the Philosophers, and the Eloquence of Orators, set it self at first to oppose that which they call'd the Foolishness of Preaching. We may consider that God sometimes chuses to work by weak means, rather then by those that seem the most able; and, as the Apostle speaks, in ver. 27. of this Chapter, *He chuses the foolish things of this World to confound the Wise, and the weak things to confound the Mighty.* With the Blessing of God the meanest, and least able Instrument shall have mighty Effects; and without that, the ablest that we can find shall have none at all. And as God is a God of Order, as he requires of us Reverence, and Obedience to Govern-

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ment, we shall certainly most please him, and be most likely to meet with his Blessing, when we attend upon his Ordinance in a way of orderly Obedience. We should consider, that if it be *likely* God will do us most good by the ablest Means; yet it is not at all *certain*, or *necessary*, that he must do it. And if we could really find out, and by following our own choice should truly fix upon the ablest, and best means, yet in the breach of the Churches Order, and when we are guilty of Disobedience, and especially when to this is added the guilt of Schism, and the setting up of separate Communions; then it is not at all likely, that God will bless the means we use, tho' it be never so able in it self: But the contrary to this may be expected, as indeed it is too easie to observe it, We may see these irregular and disobedient Persons, infatuated in their choice, and leaving far better Preaching for that which is really worse: We may see them chusing such as are most like themselves tho' not the best; and that the effect of this is, they retain all their mistakes, they are gratified, and improved in all the Distempers of their Minds, are hardened in their Sins, and perhaps fall from one Wickedness to another. Let us not then despise any Preaching, but attend upon that which the Providence of God, and the Order of the Church commits us to, expecting the good Effect and Success of it from the good Spirit of God.

2. Another use we ought to make of this Truth, is, that when we enjoy the most able means,

means, we do still expect the Efficacy and Good Effect of it only from God. As he works by the weakest means when he pleases, so 'tis he that must produce the good Effect by the ablest. And as we should displease him in despising that which is but weak means when 'tis the best he allows; so we should highly displease him too, if we should fix our Expectations intitely upon, even the ablest Instrument. God represents himself to us as Jealous of his Honour, and as greatly displeas'd when his Glory is given to another. We must not give our selves leave then to ran into excessive Admiration of any Person, nor make any Man, how well qualified soever, the Idol of our Trust and Confidence. And should consider, it is not this or that Man, who is the powerful Soul-saving Preacher, but 'tis God who gives to every Man's Labour such success as it has. To God therefore, let us always make our Humble Supplications when we go to hear, that his Blessing may cause the Word Preach'd to have its good and happy Effects upon us.

3. Whatever Benefit we receive by any Man's Preaching, it ought to be ascribed intirely to the Blessing and Grace of God. It is not Man, but God that must have the Glory of it. This the Apostle found necessary to be suggested to the *Corinthians*, who, because they had some of them been converted by the Preaching of *Saint Paul*, and some by the Preaching of *Apollos*, they were puff'd up, as he speaks, one against another; and one said

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I am of *Paul*, and another, I am of *Apollos*, and this caused Contentions and Divisions amongst them. We are greatly mistaken, and sin, when we attribute the Good we receive by the Ordinance of God to the Man that Administers it. We must neither despise, nor Idolize any of the Ministers which God has set up in his Church, nor ascribe his Benefits to the Instruments which he uses in bestowing them. As we our selves frustrate the Administrations and Endeavours of those whom we despise, so we provoke the Almighty to frustrate theirs too, whom we excessively admire, when the Divine Truths are of no relish with us, unless they be delivered by this or that Minister, and we think no one can do us any good but he, it commonly comes to pass by the just Judgment of God, that his Administrations are weak and vain too.

And thus I have finish'd the first and chief part of this Discourse. I come now in the Conclusion of it, as I promised, to urge a little the making it our great concern and care, that the Preaching of the Word of God, may be profitable to us.

1. And in the first place, the Greatness, the Importance of the Benefits which may be receiv'd by it, should awaken in us this care and concern: It is appointed and design'd, and fitted to enlighten our dark Minds with the best, the most Important, and the most pleasing Knowledge; to rectifie all the Appetites and Motions of our several Faculties; to make us Wise, and happy. It may make us wise to the Salvation

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of our Souls. The result of using it diligently and rightly will be, that we shall avoid the Everlasting Miseries of Hell which we had deserv'd, and were Obnoxious' to ; and we shall gain that Everlasting, and Glorious Happiness of Heaven which we are made for.

2. Let us consider, that our own Care and Endeavour are necessary to our receiving these Benefits by this Ordinance. We must diligently attend upon it, or else most certainly it cannot help us ; and we must use it according to the directions which have been intimated in the foregoing Discourse. Our Saviour compares the Preaching of the Word to sowing, (*Luke 8.*) and intimates, that as the success of Sowing is, according to the Nature of the Soil ; so the success of Preaching is according to the disposition, and qualification of the Hearers : And he therefore adds with relation to this, that Admonition, *Take heed therefore how ye hear.* (*ver. 18.*)

3. It is very considerable to this purpose, That if men receive no Benefit, by the Preaching of the Word of God, they are commonly the worse for it. If it does not convert a Man from his sins, he is usually the more hardened and confirm'd in them by it: He is inur'd, and accustomed to slight and despise Admonition and Reproof, and all the force of the Divine Promises and Threatnings. From a slight and careless use of this means of Grace, Men find but little or no effect that it has upon them, and then they grow indifferent whether they use it at all or not, and perhaps come at length utterly to throw off and despise the use of it :

it: and then they are forsaken by the Holy Spirit of God, and fall under the power and seducements of the Devil.

4. Let us consider how great Guilt and Provocation there must needs be in our receiving this Divine Favour in vain. We may justly believe, that nothing can be a greater Offence to God, than to slight and frustrate the means of Grace and Salvation. This is to despise the greatest Favours of Heaven; this shews the greatest obstinacy in Sin, and defiance of the Wrath and Threatnings of Almighty God. In this it appears we are not concern'd to enjoy his Favour, or to shun his Wrath. He seeks to be reconcil'd to us, but we refuse a reconciliation; he seeks to save us, and we refuse to be sav'd. And what dreadful wrath may we reasonably expect his rejected and despised Mercy and Favour will turn to. This guilt more than any assures our Damnation, as the Apostles intimates when he asks this unanswerable Question (*Heb. 2.*) *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* And our Saviour assures us it will be punish'd at last with the greatest severity, and the severest Condemnation. In that he says, *It will be more tolerable in the day of Judgment, even for the vile Inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah than for such sinners,* (*Mat. 10. 15.*)

These things I think may justly make us all very careful in this matter, that we may use this Divine Ordinance of Preaching to our Salvation: Which God of his Infinite Mercy Grant through Jesus Christ.

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O Most merciful and gracious God ! who art abundant in Goodness and in Truth. Thou, O Lord, we thank thee, dost make it gloriously appear, that thou delightest not in the death of sinners, but had rather that they should turn to thee and live. Those whom thou mightest justly destroy, thou affordest them means of attaining their salvation : And to them who deserve thy utmost Wrath and Displeasure, dost thou offer thy Favour and Love, upon reasonable and easie terms : Yea, such is thy incomparable Goodness, that thou art ready, if we will faithfully use the appointed Means of Grace, to afford us the Grace which shall enable us to perform the Conditions of thy Favour. We give thee thanks, O Lord, for this thy wonderful Goodness towards the Children of Men : And we bless thee for thy Favour to us in particular, in giving us, by the Preaching of thy Gospel, the knowledge of this thy Grace and Favour. We admire and praise, O Lord, thy Mercy, for all thy Goodness and loving Kindness to us, and for thy great and tender Care for our Everlasting Happiness. We utterly condemn and abhor our selves for all our neglect of thee, for all the ingratitude and rebellion of our sins against thee. We are ashamed to think, that ever we should do any thing contrary to the Honour and Reverence which we owe thee : We hate our selves for all that we have done offensive to the pure Eyes of thy Glory ; and it especially grieves us, O Lord, that we should shew our selves unwilling to be converted unto thee, that we should add Obstinacy to our Wickedness ; that we have not been so ready

dy as we should to comply with the gracious Terms of the Gospel; we have not thankfully embraced the Offers of Reconciliation with thee, but have slighted and refused them. We acknowledge, O Lord, the greatest Wrath to be due to us, who have slighted the Means of Grace, and, by our Carelessness, have render'd them weak and ineffectual upon us. O Lord, deal not with us as our Iniquities do deserve. Pardon all our past Offences, and accept our Humiliation and Repentance, which we humbly offer thee, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ. We purpose, for the future, to return unto thee; we will earnestly seek thy Grace in the diligent use of the Means which thou hast appointed. We pray thee, keep us stedfast to such a Resolution: And let thy Word, and all thy Blessed Ordinances, by thy Blessing, have a mighty Influence and Power upon us: Let them accomplish in us all the good Purposes for which thou hast appointed them: Grant that we may be thereby furnished for every good Work, that we may derive from them Strength and Power, to subdue all our Corruptions, to resist Temptations from the World and the Devil. Teach us, that denying all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, we may live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World. Let us, by our attendance in thy House, be as Trees planted by the Rivers of Water, bringing forth our Fruit in due season. Grant us so to live always, as that our Conversations may adorn the Doctrin of God our Saviour, and our Light may so shine before Men, that they, seeing our good Works, may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven. By a constant Communion with thee here, in the Assemblies of thy Saints, let us be fitted more and more for a nearer and more happy Communion with thee among the Spirits of Just Men made perfect in thy Heavenly Kingdom.

We heartily pray, O Lord, that the Sound of thy glorious Gospel may go out into all the World; that the Earth may be fill'd with the knowledge of the Lord,

Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea. We pray, that thy Church may be always abundantly furnish'd with faithful, able, and industrious Pastors ; and let them be encourag'd with a teachable and obedient People, and with great succels in their Labours, in turning many to Righteousnes. O Lord, be merciful to that part of thy Church to which we belong : Make us sensible how much we are oblig'd, who enjoy so abundantly the Means of Grace and Salvation ; sensible, that to whom much is given, of them much will be required ; and industrious, to bring forth Fruit answerable to the Means afforded us. Bleſs, we pray thee, our most gracious King with all Spiritual and Temporal Bleſſings : Grant him always the Grace to be a zealous Defender of thy Truth and Worship, a nursing Father to thy Church ; and do thou also defend and prosper him. Grant, that he may long reign over us : And that our Royal Family may for ever afford us such excellent Governors. Bleſs all our Relations and Friends, and forgive our Enemies and turn their Hearts. Grant, we beseech thee, that the Words which we have heard this Day, may, by thy Grace, be so ingrafted in our Hearts, as to bring forth the Fruit of good Living in our Conversations, to thy glory. Keep us, we beseech thee in safety this Night ; give us comfortable Rest, and let thy renew'd Mercies the next Morning fit us for all our Duties, for the sake of Jesus Christ : In whose own words we sum up our Requests, saying,

O UR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil: For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

Publick,

Publick, or Common Prayer, RECOMMENDED and URG'D.

Let us Pray.

PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Matth. 21. 13.

*It is written, My House shall be call'd
the House of Prayer.*

WE are told in the Verse before this, That Jesus went into the Temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the Tables of the Money-changers, and the Seats of them that sold Doves. In the words of our Text, he justifies himself to the Jews in what he had done, by a Passage of Holy Scripture, taken from Isa. 56. 7. for there it is written, *Mine House shall be call'd an House of Prayer for all People*, as that which God spoke by his Prophet. For the right

right understanding of our Saviour's action, and the reason given for it, and that we may from thence learn the Instruction afforded us, we must take notice, that the place where these Traders were, was that Court adjoining to the Temple, in which the *Gentiles*, who had left their Idolatry, perform'd their Worship of the true God. This place the *Jews* accounted to be without the Temple, and not to be an Holy Place: And therefore they permitted a Market to be held here, for the furnishing People with such things as they used in their Offerings within the Temple. But our blessed Saviour condemns this practice from that place of Scripture, and more than once he drove the buyers and sellers out from hence. And by these things he evidently instructs us, That a Place dedicated and design'd for the Worship of God, tho' it be not the Jewish Temple, may be called and accounted the House of God: That it is agreeable to the Will of God, that other Places be dedicated and devoted to his Worship, besides that in which the *Jews* were to offer their Sacrifices, and to perform their Ceremonious and Typical Worship: That when a Place is design'd and dedicated to the Worship of God, it ought to be appropriated to Religious Worship: And it is in the sight of God a great Sin, to make use of such a Place for the transacting of Worldly Affairs in it; to make no distinction between Common and Holy Places; or to turn a Church into a Stable, or a Market-place.

Having

Having thus shewn the Import of the Words from their Connexion, I shall now propose the Method in which I intend to insist upon them, which is this :

1. I shall enquire and shew, What the Phrase or Name of an *House of Prayer* does imply and suggest to us.

2. I shall urge and perswade to a due Compliance with it.

I begin with the first of these, To shew what this Phrase or Name of an House of Prayer does imply and suggest to us. It is evident, by our Saviour's applying this Name to a Place of Worship, which was used by those who did not conform themselves to the Jewish Ceremonies, That he allows the Erecting of Places for the Worship of God, besides the Jewish Temple, and requires the appropriating them to that use. We may therefore easily learn from the words these two things :

1. That God requires of all People, who acknowledge him, the Homage of an Open and Publick Worship. 2. That the Publick Worship of God is chiefly and eminently to consist of Prayer to him, understanding Prayer in the full latitude and extent of it. I desire I may speak to these in order what shall be necessary.

In the first place, it is evidently intimated herein, That God does expect of all Nations, who acknowledge him, the Homage of an Open or Publick Worship. This the Prophet foretells would be paid to God by all Nations in the times of the Christian Church : For a Common

mon House for Worship, supposes Publick or Common Worship. He foretells, and our Saviour allows, that others, besides the *Jews*, should have Places dedicated to the Worship of God ; and in this, both he and our blessed Saviour do intimate, the continuance of Publick Worship, when that of the *Jews* should be at an end. That, as they perform'd Publick Worship to God, the Christians should do so likewise : God still requires, that Companies of People do joyn together in his Worship.

It is requisite, that I confirm this Intimation from the Text, by some other Proofs from Holy Scripture ; because our times have lost, in a great measure, the due reverence and esteem for Publick Worship. Some despise it out of Prophaneness, and some neglect it from Mistake and ill Principles. They fancy they can worship God at Home, as acceptably as at Church ; and that because God is every where present, and the Apostle says, *I will, that every where Men lift up Holy Hands (in Prayer) without Wrath or Doubting.* Therefore 'tis a matter very indifferent, whether we pray in Publick, or in Private ; and that a good Man shall be accepted where-ever he prays. Against this mischievous Error, chiefly, will this Discourse be directed.

To prove, then, That God requires of us the Homage of Publick Worship, I shall desire these things following may be well observ'd.

Our blessed Saviour requires, That we publicly profess his Religion, and own him to

the view of the World, *Matth. 10. 32.* And he threatens, if we will not do so, in the 33d Verse, That he himself will *disown us before his Father, which is in Heaven*: He will not be our Mediator with the Father, nor shall we enjoy the benefit of his Patronage and Intercession. Now this publick owning of Christ, and professing of his Religion, must needs include and require the Publick Worship of him: That we do publickly and notoriously pay him the Homage of our Lord and Sovereign Ruler and Mediator, in giving him such Worship. It was in this way that the Heathens acknowledg'd their false Gods and false Mediators, and therefore, if we do truly acknowledge the one God, and one Mediator, it must needs be meant, when we are commanded to do this before Men, that we should do it in a manner visible to them, and in such a way as they were wont to acknowledge God; and therefore we must do this by Publick Worship.

Again, Without doubt, the Institution and Nature of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, does plainly evidence, that Publick Worship is requir'd of the Christian Church. In this we are commanded to *shew the Lord's Death till he comes*: The word means, to declare it, or to make publick and solemn Commemorations of it. But this must be done in a common place for Worship, and by a Company assembled for that purpose. The Apostle, speaking of this Ordinance, calls it, (*1 Cor. 10. 6.*) *A Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*, which certainly supposes several persons met toge-

together to partake of it ; and condemns the allowance of the Church of *Rome*, that the Priest may receive it alone, as well as it requires Publick Worship. From the Context of these words we may observe, That he accounts this Sacrament a Rite of the same nature with those Publick Feasts which were wont to be held in Temples, in honour of the Gods which they worshipped there : Which was a Custom used not only by the *Gentiles*, but also by the *Jews*, and these used it by the appointment of God himself. And in the participating of this Sacrament, he says, many Persons are united to one another, as into one Body, (Verse 17.) *We being many, (says he) are one Bread, and one Body, for we are all partakers of that one Bread* : Which is a very plain intimation , that they met together in a Publick Assembly to partake of this Sacrament.

And this leads me to mention another Evidence , That Publick Worship is requir'd of the Christian Church : We may justly conclude this from hence, That the Apostles and the first Converts to Christianity, did so duly assemble for the Worship of God. Those who had been led out from *Jerusalem* by our Saviour to be eye-witnesses of his ascension into Heaven, return'd immediately when he was gone , and made up a religious Assembly for Prayer and Supplication, (*Acts 1. 13, 14.*) The Number of these together were about an hundred and twenty, (Verse 15.) And by the Expression used in the 14th Verse, which says, *They conjoined with one accord in this practice,*

we must needs understand is meant, That they from thence-forth set up a course of holding Religious Assemblies for the performance of Publick Christian Worship. And tho this was done in some Private House, as the 13th Verse intimates, where 'tis said they assembled in *an upper Room*; yet we may justly believe this Room was set apart, and constantly used for these Assemblies; and, many learned Men think, it was that very Room in which our Lord celebrated his last Passover, and instituted the Sacrament of his Supper. Further, we may observe it said, of the first Converts to Christianity, *That they continued steadfastly in the Apostles Doctrine, and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers,* (Acts 2. 42.) Which can mean no less, than their diligent attendance upon the Apostles Preaching the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and their Common Prayers. Thus we see, the Apostles, who were conversant with our Lord while he liv'd on Earth, and who did certainly learn from him the Will of God in this particular, they set up Assemblies for Christian Worship, and taught the Converts to Christianity diligently to attend upon them. And we may find the Apostle Paul, who was inspired and directed by the Holy Ghost for the discharge of his Office, charging the Jewish Converts not to forsake, as it seems some did, these religious Christian Assemblies, (Heb. 10. 25.)

Further, In that our Lord has instituted an Order of Men in his Church, to admit People into the Rank of his Disciples by Baptism; to

instruct and teach them, so admitted, his Saving Religion ; to offer up Prayers for them, and administer the other Sacrament, and to bless them in his Name ; this does evidently shew, that he requires the continuance of Publick Worship in the Christian Church. What use could there be of such an Order of Publick Ministers, if Publick Worship were not intended to be still paid to God in the World ? And what need were there of these, if it were altogether as well for People to worship God in private ? And it appears he design'd this Order of Men should continue to the end of the World, in that he has promised to be with them so long in the Exercise of their Office, *Matth. 28. 26.* Which we must reckon means, He would bless their Administrations to the advantage of those who shall diligently and seriously attend upon them : And then, surely, he requires, that the People do diligently attend upon them. The Phrase, *to the end of the World*, cannot, with any reason, be limited, to mean only to the end of that particular Age.

Now, from all this, it plainly appears, That Publick Worship is still required by God ; And then it is a Sin to neglect the Publick Worship at the time appointed for it, and when we may enjoy it, tho' a Man should follow his own humour, and spend that time in Private Prayer and Meditation. And tho' God be every where present, yet we shall certainly be most likely to meet with his Blessings and Favours there, where he has appointed us to expect them. K 3 I

I proceed now to the Second Intimation in our Text, which I said is this, That the Publick Worship, which God requires, is chiefly and eminently to consist in Prayers to him; understanding Prayer in the full latitude and extent of it. This seems to be very manifestly intimated, in that the House of God, or the Place of Publick Worship, is call'd by this Name, *An House of Prayer*. This part of Publick Worship, is put for the whole, because this is a main and chief part of it: And the Place is not called an House of Preaching for the sake of that Ordinance there administred, nor an House of Sacrificing, tho' in the Christian Church the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is a Rite which answers the Jewish Sacrifices, and represents the Messiah come, and his Sacrifice perform'd, as they represented it future, and to be perform'd: But it is call'd an House of Prayer, as that which it is rather intended for, than Preaching, and as what is the more eminent, and therefore ought ordinarily to be the greatest part of our busines there.

It is very necessary to insist upon this Particular, because of great Mistakes and Disorders among us, occasion'd by the want of considering this. It is by many thought, That Preaching and Hearing of Sermons, is to be the chief and the greatest part of Publick Worship: From whence many spend the greatest part of the time of Worship usually in this: And think, that the Prayers should be shortned, that the Sermon may be long: Yea, and they

they may be observ'd even to contrive their Place of Worship more with relation to the Preaching, than to any other part of the Worship, and so intirely to regard the conveniency of that, as to neglect the conveniency of Prayer, and make them inconvenient for the due performance of this. Many disdain the Publick Worship, when they say of it, *There will be nothing but Prayers.* And tho' there are but too few who will attend on the Publick Preaching, in proportion to the Numbers that might, and that ought to appear there; yet there are still fewer that will come to the Publick Worship only for the sake of the appointed Prayers, and when they are not invited to it with the hopes of a Sermon, and that perhaps, too, from some such Preacher, whom the Vogue has, right or wrong, celebrated and extoll'd. These are very great and very pernicious Disorders, and proceed from the advancing this Ordinance of Preaching above its due place.

I doubt not, but Preaching and Hearing the Word of God, are Acts of Worship; for in the doing of these rightly, both the Preacher and the Hearers do acknowledge and celebrate the Infinite Perfections of God, his Sovereignty over us, and his Benefits bestow'd upon us. It is an Act of Homage and Worship, to afford an obedient attentive Hearing to the Declarations of the Divine Will. But when we place so much of Religion in Hearing the Word of God, we are apt to let the doing of his Will want its due. And we should consider,

der, that Prayer is the end of Preaching. We use Preaching as the appointed Means to work in us those Graces and Vertues of the Holy Spirit, which must be exercised in Praying and Living Well, and which must inable us to do both. Prayer is appointed for it self, Preaching but in order to somewhat else. And then, that which is but a Means, and is appointed for the sake of somewhat else, must not be accounted more excellent, than the end for which it is appointed: Neither may we neglect or set by Prayer, that we may spend the more time in Preaching and Hearing. That which is the most noble and the chiefest part of Worship, should be chiefly attended.

Besides we may consider, That as the Publick Prayers are perform'd in our Church, they are always attended with that which is, perhaps, the best as well as the truest Preaching, according to the Scripture Notion of this; I mean, the Reading of several Portions of Holy Scripture. As a learned Father of our Church has demonstrated. (*Bishop of London-derry, his Discourse concerning Inventions of Men, &c.*) And the Usefulness of our Publick Prayers, to the promoting Piety and a Good Life, even without the constant addition of such Preaching to them, as some make the chief business of Publick Worship, is found by the happy experience of those who do frequently and seriously attend upon them.

The Observation of a pious and learned Divine of our Church at present, concerning the Efficacy and good influence of our Method

of Prayers, even when it has been used alone is very considerable.

He takes notice, "That in the Reigns of " King *Edward* the VI. and for several Years " of Queen *Elizabeth*, there was little or no " Preaching in most parts of the Kingdom, " and very few People then could read their " own Language: Yet by the constant gene- " ral use of our Liturgy, and Gods Blessing " upon it, the whole Nation so mightily im- " prov'd in true Knowledge, that there was " scarce one in an Hundered to be found, who " did not forsake and abhor the Errours, and " Absurdities of Popery. (Dr. *Beveridge*, his Sermon on the *Excel. Usef. Com. Prayer.*)

I confess, It is not to be wondred at, if they, who in their Religious Assemblies are put off with the rash and unpremeditated Exercise of their Ministers Gifts in Extemporany Prayer, do require, that a greater part of the time of Publick Worship should be spent in the Sermon: That so they may be entertain'd with that which is, perhaps, somewhat better studied and consider'd, and more fit to edifie and improve them. But in this Case, it is one mistake which has betray'd them into another. Their unhappy Opinion, that 'tis lawful or best for Ministers, who are not divinely and immediately Inspired, as the Apostles were, to pray in Publick without the use of a Form, is that which has led them to think, that the greatest and the most indispensable part of Publick Worship ought to be the Preaching, and Hearing of a Sermon: Because, indeed in their way

way of Worship, they find by experience, that this is that which they can best expect to receive Advantage and Benefit by.

But when I speak of Prayer as that which we should account the chief and main part of Publick Worship: I would be understood to speak of it as in its full Latitude, and extent: As it includes the Praise of God in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: And as including also the Celebration of Sacraments which we know is done in Acts of Prayer. Now since these are appointed as well as Preaching; the Worship is as truly defective when it wants the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, as when it wants a Sermon: And if the Circumstances of the Congregation will allow without Guilt, the Omission of that Sacrament at some times of Publick Worship; they will also allow the Omission of a Sermon. And if we come together and Pray, and Celebrate the Lords Supper without a Sermon, we do then perform a main and chief part of Publick Worship, tho we ought not at any time to neglect the other. A Sermon should be added to the Worship at Extraordinary times, as when a Day is set apart to the Worship of God, or when necessary Worldly Affairs will allow time enough for it on other days; but it needs not to be joyn'd to the Ordinary daily Prayers in Publick.

I have now finish'd the first part of this Discourse, which was intended to inquire, and shew what is Included or Implied in our Text by the Phrase, or Name, of an *House of Prayer*. It intimates, as I have said, thus much, that God expects

pects to be worshipped by Publick Prayers: And this is that which he accounts, and requires, as the main and chief part of Publick Worship.

I proceed now to the Second part of the discourse; in which I am to urge our diligent and constant attendance upon the Publick Prayer. I hope the former part of the Discourse will be look'd upon, as somewhat serviceable to this purpose: And therefore I shall insist but upon these Three Arguments to promote it. 1. The Laws and Commands of the Governors of that Church in which we live. 2. The great Honour which we therein do to Almighty God. 3. The great Advantages which will redound to our selves from our diligent and serious attendance on the Publick Prayers.

1. In the first place, It is considerable, that the Laws and Commands of the Church, in which we live, do require a diligent and frequent attendance upon the Publick Prayers. It is appointed in the Preface to our Publick Liturgy under the Title, concerning the service of the Church, that all Priests are to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly, not being let or hindered by sickness, or some other urgent cause. It is not to be doubted, but that this Rule obliges the Priests of the Church to offer up the Churches Prayers in Publick every day, if they are not invincibly hindred from doing it: But then the same Rule implies an Obligation on the People to Assemble diligently to the Publick Prayers. And this their Attendance on the Opportunities which they can have of

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Publick Prayer, is expreſly requir'd in the Fifteenth *Canon*, where concerning the Litany, 'tis ſaid particularly, that it ſhall be uſed in Publick on Wednesdays and Fridays Weekly, tho they be not Holidays. And that the Mi-niſter ſhall at the accuſtomed Hour reſort to the Church, and give notice to the People to Asſeble. And the *Canon* adds a deſire, that every Family within a convenient diſtance would afford one, at leaſt, to joyn with the Mi-niſter in Prayer. How fitting indeed is it, that one ſhould be ſpared to pray for the reſt, while they are engag'd in the Affairs of the World? That ſo a Bleſſing might be obtain'd, by Prayer, upon their Endeavours, to the ad-vantage of the whole Family. And how com-monly might one or more in a Family be ſpa-red for this, if People would be mi-nful, and endeavour to do their Duty in this Caſe? Theſe Rules formention'd are afreſh enforced, by thoſe Excellent and Pious Injunctions, which His Ma-jeſty has lately given to the Arch-Bi-ſhops of this Rea-ſm, in which it is di-rected (Injunction. 11.) "That the Bi-ſhops do uſe their "utmoſt endeavour to oblige their Clergy to "have publick Prayers in the Church, not on- "ly on Holidays and Litany-days, but as of- "ten as may be. Thus we may evidently ſee, that the La-ws, and Gove-nors of the Church, do require the Peo-ples di-ſtant attendance up-on the Publick Prayers.

And now may it not juſtly be thought a ſtrange and lamentable thing, that it ſhould be ne-ces-ſary in a Christian Church to Vindi-
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cate this as a considerable Argument? Should not Christianity teach Men Meekness, and Obedience, and a Reverence to Laws and Government? But alas, we have too many among us, who in words profess Christ, but in their Works do deny him; and who have indeed a Form of Godliness, but appear greatly wanting in the Power of it. And the needless scruples, and unconsider'd mistakes of some have been so manag'd, as to weaken the Authority of the Church, and to occasion the Prophanes of others, by occasioning a too common contempt of several very excellent and wholsom Rules, which have a great tendency and usefulness in themselves towards the promoting of True Religion. Let us all consider, to enforce this Argument; That if this be a Law of the Governors of the Church, it is a Law of Christ, since it is no way contradictory to any of his Written Laws. They deceive themselves, who call the Commands of Governors in such a case the Traditions, Inventions, or Commands of Men, and let themselves despise them under such Names: For it is indeed Jesus Christ, the unquestionable King, and Supreme Head of the Church, who lays these Laws upon us by them. It is he who requires, that they who govern the Church under him be obey'd in their Lawful Commands. And he by the Apostle *Paul* enjoynes Obedience to Governors, *Not only for wrath, but for conscience sake*: That is, not only to avoid the Wrath of him who has power to Punish, but to discharge a good Conscience in Obedience to

to him who has Authority to Command. We do, then, certainly sin against God, when we neglect and despise the good Laws and Orders of the Church, which he himself plainly teaches us in his saying, to those whom he had appointed the Governors of his Church, *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.* And since the Establish'd way of Worship is such, as that all good Souls, who seriously use it, do find great Advantage, and Edification from it: They who cannot do so too, and would from thence excuse their deserting it, may more justly ascribe this to their not being accustomed to it, or to the prejudices which they have conceiv'd against it, than to any fault or defect in the thing it self. But I must proceed to another Argument.

2. Publick Worship is more to the Honour of God, than that which is private. All the Exercises or Acts of Worship Honour God; therefore he himself says, *Who so offereth Praise glorifieth me:* And then the more publickly we do this, we do the more glorifie him. It is very evident, that Honour is always the greater the more publick it is. He who has great and admiring Thoughts of God, and publishes this to the World, in the most solemn manner, does honour him a great deal more, than he who keeps these Thoughts to himself, and who Praises and Worships God, so as no one knows he does it but himself. God is to be consider'd and own'd, in the best manner that we can, as a Publick Benefactor, as the Universal Friend,

Friend, and Parent of Mankind, and as the Common Sovereign and Lord of the World; And it is more Honour to Consider and Worship him as such, than only as a Friend or Sovereign to a particular Person; and there is no visible Acknowledgment or Worship of God, as such, unless by Publick Worship: Therefore without this, God would want the greatest Honour and Glory that he ought to receive from us. And this too is certainly an Argument very worthy to prevail with us. It is highly reasonable and fitting, that we give to God the greatest Honour we are able: Who is the most Excellent Being, the most Universal, and the greatest Benefactor, the Fountain Good on whom we depend for our Being, and for all that we enjoy. It is fit we give him the greatest Honour that we can, when we can never pay him more than is due, and after all that we have done, his Infinite Excellency and Greatness exalts him above all Blessing and Praise.

3. The last Argument I shall use is this, That Publick Worship and Prayer, is that from whence we may expect most advantage to our selves. To give this the more force, I shall a little insist upon these two particulars which it comprehends. 1. To Pray in Publick is of great advantage for the better performance of our Prayers. 2. This is of great advantage also for the better success of our Prayers.

1. To pray in Publick is a great Advantage for the better performance of our Prayers. This is a great help both to our Faith and also to the Fervency of our Prayers. It

It is a help to our Faith and Trust in God, to see that others put their trust in him, that he is the common refuge of distress and craving Souls: It is he to whom all Flesh come with their Supplications: And many account him a God hearing Prayers. A multitude does in all cases give Encouragement: Besides, the humble and good Christian, who has a mean opinion of himself, will be apt to think his Prayers more acceptable with God, when joyn'd with those of an Assembly of Saints, than when they are offer'd up by himself alone. Further, The place of Publick Worship, being that where we are wont to Celebrate the Solemn Commemoration of the Death of Christ in the Lords Supper, we shall be apt to be put in mind of this by the place, when we pray there, tho' this Sacrament be not then Celebrated. And it will be a great advantage and help to our Faith, to have a fresh remembrance of that Death, which was a compleat, and full attonement for our Sins, a perfect and accepted Propitiation, that Death which was Meritorious of the Divine Favour to Guilty Rebellious Creatures; and to call to mind, that we have there been united to this Sacrifice, in that we have been partakers of it, and so have been interested in the Virtue and Merits of it. This Advantage we may derive in some measure from the place, but I must add it will be much more, when the Sacrament it self is Celebrated there.

And as it is a help to our Faith, so it is also to our Devotion to pray in Publick. It tends

to private and secret prayer

to dispose us to Reverence and Care, to consider, that we are in the House of God, in the Place of his Special Residence and Presence: And that here the Hosts of Glorious Angels attend, when the Saints meet to Worship. Besides, the Fervency and Devotion of other Pious Souls, with whom we joyn in Pulick, will encrease our Fervour and Devotion: Many warm hearts together will help to kindle each other into an Ardent Flame. Yea, the very outward gestures and shews of Devotion in others, will be useful to stir up and encrease our Devotion. And to a good and devout Soul, it will be a spur and incentive to the more Seriousness and Devotion, to see some others, it may be, too Irreverent and Careless; because such an one will naturally fall into this thought, that his Reverence and Seriousnes may perhaps influence the other to be serious too, and may cure their Irreverence; as such a Soul will naturally desire, that all others were Devout and Reverent in the Worship of God. Thus is it a help to the better performance of our Prayers to pray in Publick.

2. It is also an help to the better success of our Prayers. This may be concluded from the former Argument; for as we do herein give God the greatest Honour, we may expect, that we shall also hereby receive from him the greatest Blessings. Again, If this be an Advantage for the better performance of our Prayers, it must be so for the better success and acceptance of them; for we may justly suppose, that the better they are perform'd, the more

L they

they will succeed. Again, the Psalmist teaches us this, when he says, *God loves the Gates of Sion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob, Psal. 87. 2.* Intimating, that in the place of Publick Worship, when an Assembly of Saints meet, and pray to him together, he is chiefly wont to communicate his Favour and Blessings. Let us consider to this purpose the Apostle *Paul*, whom we find often desiring to be remembred in the Publick Prayers of the Church, as in *2 Cor. 1. 11.* and elsewhere: But certainly, if any particular Person amongst us, might conceit, that his own Prayers offer'd up alone to God would prevail better with him, as being more pure than those of a mingled Congregation, this great Apostle and Favourite of Heaven, might more reasonably have had such a thought. And he certainly condemns the Pride of such an imagination, in that he thought the Common-Prayer of the Church more likely to succeed than his own private Prayer. Besides, we are to reckon, that the inspired Apostle was directed by the Holy Ghost, to give us a Rule in his Example in this case: And we may justly believe, That God himself teaches us by the Apostle, that Common or Publick Prayer is most acceptable to him, and shall have ordinarily the greatest success. Let us consider lastly, Our Blessed Saviour's encouragement of Common-Prayer, in *Mat. 18. 19, 20.* If two of you shall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my Name,

am I in the midst of them. These things may justly make us highly value Publick Worship, be pleased when we hear the Summons to it, and readily to use all the Opportunities we can of joyning in it. Now to God the Father, God the Son. &c.

THE PRAYER.

Almighty, Everlasting God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and Preserver of all things. Thou art the Fountain Good, the Author and Giver of every good, and perfect Gift. To thee O Lord, is all our Adoration, and Worship, and Homage due: And thou art worthy that we Adore and Reverence, and Praise thee in the best manner we can, both for the excellent Perfections of thy Nature, and for thy Wonderful Goodness to the Children of Men. And we must own, we have great occasion and necessity to address to thee our humble requests and supplications; for we have our continual dependance upon thee, we cannot subsist one moment without thy upholding influence, we derive our food and raiment, and all the supports and comforts of our Life from thy Bounty, and the benefit and comfort of them from thy Blessing. Neither do we less depend, O Lord, upon thy powerful Grace for every good Thought, or Word, or Work: Without thee, alas, and thy constant Assistance, we can do nothing that is good. We have always need to say, prevent us, O Lord, with thy most Gracious Favour, stir up in our hearts at all times good desires, and further us with thy continual help,

and bring those desires to good effect; Work in us to will and do that which is good. But when we consider our Obligation, and the Occasion we have to Worship and Seek to thee, We are forced to condemn our selves for all our indifferency towards this duty, and for our negiect of Prayer. We have been foolish and negligent of our own Interest, when we have neglected our Prayers. We have reason to abhor our selves, for having been at all forgetful of thee who art always mindful of us, and for that we have too often neglected to return thee our daily, and solemn Praises for thy daily benefits heaped upon us. O Lord, we are ashamed of all our neglects, and of the Sinful Omissions of the good which we ought to have done. We pray thee pardon us what is past, and accept of us now, desiring and purposing to return to our Duty. We will endeavour to perform it for the future in the best manner that we can. But we must come unto thee O Lord, even with this request, that thou wouldest teach us to Pray. We therefore beseech thee to pour upon us the Spirit of Grace and Supplication. Make us to encline to thy Worship, to take delight in it, and to rejoice at the happy opportunities which we have of paying thee the greatest and most Publick Honour. Grant us the Grace to Worship thee in Spirit and in Truth, with Reverence and Godly Fear, with Fervency and Devotion. Increase we pray thee, our too weak Faith: Help us to rely upon thy Mercy through the Merits, and Mediation of Jesus Christ; and grant us we pray thee at all times such encouragement in the gracious answer of our Prayers as may be most expedient for us; Grant us in this World knowledge of thy Truth, and in the World to come, Life Everlasting.

We humbly pray unto thee for all Mankind, that thou wouldest be pleased to reveal thy self to them that know thee not, that all the People may praise thee. Blest thy Church with great encrease of the Knowledge and Love of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ; and give it every where the happiness of a peace.

peaceable and quiet enjoyment of a pure Worship and Ordinances. We pray thee look in mercy upon that part of it, which thy right Hand has planted amongst us: Root up all the Tares of false Doctrine, and dividing Principles which the Enemy has sown among us, and unite us one to another again, that we may with one mind, and one mouth glorifie thee our God. We pray for thy abundant Blessings upon our Sovereign Lord King *William*: Direct him in all his ways, that they may please thee, and make thou his Enemies to be at peace with him: Give him a long Health and Happiness, and upon his Head let his Crown long flourish. We pray thee continue, multiply, and bless the Royal Family, make all the Branches of it Illustrious in Piety, Wisdom, and Virtue, as they are in Birth, and let it always be, as at present, the Glory and the Happiness of these Kingdoms. Do good to all our Relations according to their several necessities; Receive our Prayers which we have this day offer'd thee in the Name of Jesus Christ, and bestow upon us all what is requisite to our living to thy Glory, and our obtaining Everlasting Happiness. We implore thy Gracious Protection this Night, and that we may have comfortable rest, and yet continue to praise and serve thee in this World, if it be thy good Pleasure. All we humbly ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, in whose words we conclude our poor Addresses, saying,

O UR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil: For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

THE
ASCENSION
OF OUR
Blessed Saviour,
Represented and Improv'd.

Let us Pray.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mark 16. 19.

So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into Heaven, and sat down on the right hand of God.

IT is without doubt, that a great part of the Happiness of Heaven, will lie in the Devout Contemplation, and Praise of the Infinitely Glorious God, and his Wonderful Works:
And

And among his Works, that, which 'tis likely will afford us the greatest delight, and him the greatest Praise, will be his most kind Redemption and Salvation of Mankind by Jesus Christ. And then it is some measure of Heaven here, to be thus employ'd now; and to have devout Affections raised in us, by the serious Contemplation of the several steps and advances of this great Affair; and this, like a lower degree of the same thing, will be a sure way towards the higher Degrees, and the Perfection of it. To require and command this practice, then, is but to impose Happiness upon us; to require us to acquaint our selves with some degrees of Heaven now, and to be in the way to more. The Holy Church has consulted our Interest and Advantage in directing a solemn and deliberate Meditation, on what the loving Jesus has done for our Salvation, at some particular and fixed times. Other Necessities, and other Duties will hinder us, that we cannot at all times so do this; and yet it will require such a Meditation on these things, to give them their due influence upon us, and to give us a true relish of the Pleasures which they afford. And if we do not set our selves with very solemn application and care at such set times to Meditate on them, it will be likely to happen to us, as it too commonly does to those who slight this Practice, that under pretence of more frequent meditating on these things, we shall never do it seriously at all; and instead of being, sensible always of and affected with them, we shall never be duly

so. We have good reason, to render such a sort of Impositions, to be no Impositions at all, by chusing the things imposed our selves, and by a ready compliance with the Commands of the Church.

At this Season we are invited to a Solemn and Religious Commemoration of our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, and his sitting down at the Right Hand of God. To promote which, I shall at present insist upon this Subject, and in the following Method.

1. I shall endeavour to explain, as far as the Holy Scripture allows it, this Article of our Lord's Ascension.

2. I shall make it appear, That the promised Messiah, was, according to the Prophecies concerning him, to ascend into Heaven.

3. I judge it proper, to produce briefly the Account and Proof which the Scriptures of the New Testament give us of the Ascension of Jesus, and his Sitting at the Right Hand of God.

4. I shall apply the Discourse to its proper Use and Improvement. It will be convenient, in the first place, to explain and state this Article, as far as we may. In order to which, I must give an Account of these following Matters. 1. Who it was that the Text says did ascend into Heaven. 2. What is meant by this, That *he was received up into Heaven*. 3. What by this, That *he sat down on the Right Hand of God*. 4. What are the Reasons and Ends of this his Ascension into Heaven.

1. We

1. We must endeavour rightly to understand who it was that ascended into Heaven. The Text says, *The Lord*, when he had spoken to those about him, did so; that is, the Son of God, the Second Person in the glorious Trinity. He ascended, that first descended, as the Apostle speaks, (*Eph. 4. 10.*) and that was the Son of God. He begun his descent, when *the Word was made Flesh*; when *he took upon him the Form of a Servant*; being *made under the Law*: He carried it on further, when he suffer'd Death upon the Cross; and finish'd that, when he was buried and descended into Hell. He begun his ascent, when he rose from the dead; carried this on further, when he ascended into Heaven; and compleated it, when he sate down at the Right Hand of God; advancing in this his Humane Nature to the Dignity and Glory of his Divine Person, as he had humbled and brought down the Divine Person before to the meanness and subjection of his Humane Nature. The Son of God was at the Right Hand of God in all the Dignity and Glory which this signifies before his Incarnation: In taking to himself the Humane Nature, he did in a manner leave that glorious station for a while, but was now exalted and restor'd to it again. He himself speaks thus of this matter, he says, *John 16. 28. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World, and go to the Father.* He says to the Father, *John 17. 4, 5. I have glorified thee on Earth; I have finish'd the Work which thou gavest me to do: And now, O*

Father, glorifie thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the World was. He says to his Disciples, *What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?* John 6. 62. All which Expressions plainly signifie, that he was not in Heaven while he was on Earth, so as he was before he came to dwell on Earth, and as he was going to be again upon his ascension thither. 'Tis true, he says, John 3. 13. of himself, that the Son of Man was in Heaven even while he was on Earth; but this must be understood in a different respect: In his Divine Nature he is always in Heaven, because he is every where: But the Person of the Son of God, did, for a while, in a peculiar manner make his abode on Earth with the Nature and in the Quality of a Man. He that was superior to the Law, and made it, became subject to it. But at length, ascending again, he carried also his Humane Nature, which he assum'd here; and exalted that to the Dignity and Glory which belongs to him, as Son of God at the Right Hand of God. To this purpose, one of the Ancients speaks of this matter, (to name no more) *Angelici Spiritus* (says he) *delectantur in eo, Quod Forma servi sit reversa in Formam Dei: Et Exinanitio Humilitatis ad deposita Altitudinis redierit Majestatem.* (Tract. de Resurrect. Ch. inter op. Cypr.) And a very learned Man of our own time says, with relation to the word *ικένως*, in Phil. 2. 7. *Nor does the Son of God save me, but by emptying himself in a manner for a while of his first glory in Heaven.* (Brevint Christ. sacr. p. 24.) We must thus

thus speak of this Matter, and say, The Person of the Son of God descended and ascended ; because we must not confound the Person and the Divine Nature, as is too frequently done ; and from thence occasion is given to others, to start into the contrary extream, and, denying the Deity of Jesus Christ, to confound the Person and the Humane Nature. This, then, is he that ascended even the Second Person of the Trinity, the Son of God.

2. Let us now observe, what is meant by this in the Text, *He was received up into Heaven.* By Heaven, is here meant, the Place beyond all that is visible to us of this World. For 'tis the import of that Scripture, (*Heb. 4. 14.* *Pearson* on the Creed) that he is pass'd through the Heavens ; that is, through the visible Heavens, which contain all the Stars. He is ascended, and has carried the Human Nature into that place where the Angels chiefly reside, if they have all one dwelling place : Or where the highest and brightest Order of them dwells, if there be several and different Habitations for them ; where the glory and majesty of the great God makes the greatest discoveries of himself ; and where, from the largest and most bountiful Communications of the Divine Fulnes, there is the greatest Bliss and Happiness enjoy'd.

3. It is said in the Text, *He sat down on the Right Hand of God :* Which we must understand is spoken after the manner of Men, and in allusion to what is customary among us. And, as among Men, the Right Hand is the chief Instrument of Action, and so is reckon'd the

the chief Seat of Active Power : and the Right Hand is the place we give to those whom we honour ; so, when it is said, Jesus Christ is *sat down at the Right Hand of God*, this means, he is exalted to the highest Dignity and Authority ; he is instated in an universal Dominion over all things ; and he has the disposal of all the Exercises of Almighty Power. And the Holy Scripture so speaks of this matter, as to give us ground thus to interpret this Expression : For he says of himself (*Math. 26. 64.*) to the chief Priests, That they should hereafter see him *sitting on the Right Hand of Power* ; that is, exercising the Divine Omnipotency ; perhaps he means in raising of the dead. And the Apostle says of him, *God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own Right Hand, far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named ; not only in this World, but also in that to come, and hath put all things under his Feet*, *Ephes. 1. 20, 21, 22.* That is, he hath exalted his Authority above every other Authority and Dignity, whether in Heaven or Earth.

4. For further Explication of this Article of our Faith, I must produce what account the Holy Scripture gives us of the Reasons and Ends of this our Lord's Ascension into Heaven. It may be said, It was due to the Son of God to sit at the Right Hand of God, in all the Glory, Dignity, and Power, which that implies ; and when he return'd to that, he was but restor'd to his natural eternal Right,

Right, as Son of God ; from which he had, for a while, receded for the Glory of the Father, and out of Love to Men. Therefore is this remarkably call'd, *His Glory*, which he is entered into upon his ascension into Heaven, *Luke 24. 26.* But yet even his ascension into Heaven, and sitting down at the Right Hand of God, as well as his coming down from thence, was design'd, and does turn to our benefit and advantage ; this was done for our sakes, as well as for his own ; he rose from the dead, for our justification, because as he died in the quality of a Mediator, so he rose again in the same quality, and in the same he ascended up into Heaven, and sat down at the Right Hand of God. The Apostle therefore says, *Ephes. 4. 10.* *He is ascended up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things.* It might have been said fulfil ; and so the Text may, according to other Scriptures, be reckon'd to mean : He ascended, that he might perfectly accomplish and compleat the Work of our Salvation, and effectually bring many Sons to glory. How this Ascension and Glorification of Jesus has an Efficacy towards this, the Scripture teaches us, in the following Particulars.

1. He is ascended into Heaven, to intercede with God the Father for us ; and obtain, by his Prayer, all that Favour which is necessary to our Eternal Happiness. It is therefore said, (*Heb. 9. 24.*) *He is entred into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us.* And, (*Heb. 7. 25.*) *He ever liveth to make intercession for*

for us. There were two parts of the High-Priests Office under the Jewish Dispensation, design'd to represent the kind Offices of our Mediator : The first was, To make Sacrifice or Oblation for the People : The second was, To Pray or Intercede for the Favour of God, by vertue and through the merit of the Sacrifice. And the Holy Scripture ascribes both these to Jesus, the Christ : Of the Messiah, the Prophet, foretells, he should *bear the Sin of many*, which is the Scripture-phrase for suffering for Sin ; this expresses his sacrificing : That he would make himself the Great Propitiatory Sacrifice ; and then the Prophet adds also, *He shall make Intercession for the Transgressors*, Isa. 53. 12. And the Apostle ascribes these things to Jesus, 1 John 2. 1, 2. where he says, *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sin.*

He intercedes to take our Prayers and present them to the Father, that they may be accepted with him. And very fitting it is, that God should honour himself so far, as to keep the distance of a wronged Superiour, from his guilty, rebellious Creatures and Vassals : That he should not suffer them, at first especially, to approach him, without the Intervention and Intercession of a very worthy Mediator. It is therefore said, *That by Jesus Christ, we have access to God the Father*, Ephes. 2. 18.

Further, Tho' he had, by his meritorious Life and Death, fully satisfied Divine Justice, and purchased for us all the Favour from God, that

that we need towards our Salvation, yet is it appointed and very fitting, that he should pray for this, and obtain it by his intercession, for this reason: It is by the free goodness of God to us, that this way of Salvation is allow'd us; and that we have benefit by the Death and Sacrifice of Jesus Christ in our stead. The way to Heaven is not open'd by Justice alone, but by a very glorious Mercy and Compassion to lost sinners. This Exercise of Free Goodness or Grace in all that is done by God in favour to us, is often express'd in Scripture: The Apostle for this says, We come to a Throne of Grace, when we make our Addresses to God, *Heb. 4. 16.* And 'tis said, *by Grace we are saved, Ephes. 2. 5. And we are justified freely by his Grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Rom. 3. 24.* Tho this is by Redemption, yet is it of Free Grace too, because the allowance of a Redemption was from thence. Now, as the Sacrifice and Death of Christ acknowledg'd and honour'd the Justice of God, and confess'd the guilty Creatures desert of punishment; so this Intercession acknowledges his Mercy and Free Goodness: It signifies and owns, that we are beholden to such an Attribute for all the Favour that we receive: And it is certainly due to God's goodness to be thus acknowledg'd.

2. Jesus Christ is ascended into Heaven. To take Possession of that Happiness in our Name, and for us. Therefore is he said to be entred into Heaven as our Harbinger or *Forerunner, Heb. 6. 20.* And he himself, when he spoke of going

going thither, tells his Disciples, He was going to prepare a place for them, John 14. 2. He had made satisfaction for our Sins in his Death, and reconcil'd the Father to us; and it was just, that he should thereupon be releas'd from Death, therefore he rose again on the third Day. And having merited the Favour of God for us, it was due to him even as Mediator, that he should take possession of what he had merited. So that we may look upon his Advancement into Heaven, as a Pledge and Assurance of ours; as shewing, and as design'd to shew, that we have, by him, a Right and Title to Everlasting Joy and Blessedness in the presence of God, if we do embrace and comply with the Terms of the Gospel.

3. He is sat down at the Right Hand of God, partly for us too: In that he has therein Power and Authority to dispense and bestow the Favours which he has purchased for us. The Apostle teaches us this, when he says, *He is made Head over all Things to the Church*, Ephes. 1. 22. That is, for the sake of that, and to the benefit of that. The Scripture also tells us, *He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of Sins.* 'Tis said of this his Mediatorial Kingdom, 1 Cor. 15. 25. That *he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet.* The Enemies meant here, are the things that oppose and hinder his grand Design, the Salvation of Men. So that we may understand, hereby, he is exalted to this Dignity and Power, that he might give us Grace to overcome the Temptations of

of the Devil, the wicked solicitations of our own sinful Nature; and that he might raise us up again from Death at the Last Day; for the last Enemy that shall be destroy'd is Death, *ver. 26.* It is very fitting, since by his deep Humiliation and Abasement he had purchased these things, that he should have the Honour to bestow them.

It may seem indeed unsuitable to his Interceding and Praying for these things, to say, that he is instated in the Authority to dispence them: But these things very well consist together. For God the Father, as the Ancients speak, is the Fountain of the Deity. From him the Son and Holy Ghost eternally derive their Divine Nature: And the Son himself confesses, that the Father had given to him to have Life in himself. Therefore also must the First Person in the Trinity be accounted the first spring or source of all gracious and kind Communications to the Creatures: And the Grace that saves us, is obtained of the Father by the Son, and is applied to us by the Holy Ghost. For the sake of the Son does the Father afford all good by the Operation of the Holy Ghost. The Son of God, then, as Second Person in the Trinity obtains from the Father, all favour for us by his Intercession; and by pleading his own merits on our behalf. And he gives the good things thus obtain'd as Son of God too; that is as being of equal Authority and Power with the Father. And these things are represented, in that he is said, to be a *Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedek:*

chisedek: Who, as *Moses* tells us, was both King and Priest. As a Priest towards God, he intercedes for us, as a King towards us, he bestows, as he pleases, the Graces necessary to our Salvation.

Thus are we taught to own, that we have all good given to us for his sake alone, and not for any merit or worth in us: and are admonish'd thereby, as is very fitting, to have always an humble fence of our own unworthiness, even when we are most highly, and particularly favour'd. And thus is the course of this great transaction, in all respects most suitable to the Nature and State of the Beings concern'd in it.

Thus much I think may suffice for Explication of this Great Article of our Faith: And so I have finish'd the first head of Discourse.

The Second I proposed to insist upon is this, to make it appear, that the promised Messiah was to ascend into Heaven, and sit at the right hand of God, according to the Prophesies concerning him, which the Jewish Religion afforded. And for proof of this, I think it may be sufficient to produce these two places.

The First shall be, that of *Psal. 68. 18.* where we have these words, *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for Men, yea even for the Rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* This place of Scripture the Apostle *Paul* applies to Jesus, as fulfil'd in his Ascension into Heaven, *Ephes. 4. 8.* and that it does belong to this, and foretell it, will plainly appear, if we

we consider, and rightly understand the Text. In these words the Psalmist does indeed Celebrate, according to the scope and design of the whole Psalm, those glorious deliverances which it had pleased God to give the People of *Israel* from their Enemies and his: But he speaks of this, after the manner of Prophesies, in Terms that have a force and meaning, above the particular occasion which they refer to, and which do thereby appear to be a Prediction of far greater things. *Thou hast ascended on high*; the word translated on high is commonly in the Hebrew Language used for Heaven it self. And when he speaks of ascending into Heaven, he implies, that there was first a descending; which can never be properly spoken of God the Father, but may be said of the Son of God, as the Jews did acknowledg the Messiah to be, *Thou hast led captivity captive*: This may referr to the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt* as past; and foretell the deliverance of some of the dead Saints from the Bonds of Death, at the Resurrection of Jesus; or else, that general Goal-delivery which he shall give to all the Dead at the end of the World; or it may be design'd to intimate that Spiritual deliverance which he would give the World, in *Saving his People from their Sins*; as 'tis said in the Gospel Jesus would do.

Thou hast received gifts for Men: The Hebrew word which we render received, signifies a receiving to give, according to the Phrase, not unusual in our own Language, take this to such an one; which means take this to give it

to him; thus in particular the word is used, *1 Kings 17. 10, 13.* The Apostle might therefore well enough quote the words thus, *Thou hast received Gifts for Men*, as he does in that forementioned place: Understanding the Psalmist, as meaning, thus much thou hast received gifts to give to Men. And in that sense this Scripture cannot be applied to God the Father, who is the Original Fountain of all things, and does not properly receive any thing from any one: But it may be applied to the Son of God, and particularly to his *receiving the promise of the Holy Ghost*, as 'tis said, Jesus did, and that too upon his Ascending; as the Psalmist intimates this receiving should be granted upon the ascending on high: And to that receiving of the Holy Ghost, and sending his wonderful gifts into the World, which is ascribed to Jesus, the Apostle applies this expression of the Psalmist.

He adds lastly, *Yea even for the Rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell among them*: which words may as fairly from the Original be render'd thus: *Thou hast taken or brought the Rebellious also to God, that they might dwell with him*: And so we may judge the Psalmist means, that these mighty deliverances had made some of the Gentile World become Proselytes to the Jewish Religion, and Worshippers of the true God, as the thing that was past; and did herein foretell the numerous **Conversions** of Heathens to the Faith of Jesus, which came to pass upon the Gift of the Holy Ghost to the World, and was indeed brought to pass thereby.

by. Thus we may see this Scripture exactly speaks what may be applied to Jesus; and therefore may be reckon'd to fortell the things which are said of his Ascension, and the consequences thereof.

Another, and the last place I shall point to for this purpose is, *Psal. 110. 1.* where *David* speaks thus, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand untill I make thine Enemies thy Foot-stool.* It is evident, that *David* was the Composer of this Psalm; therefore he does not speak the things herein contain'd of himself, but of some other Person: And that Person he calls his Lord. It is apparent also, that the Ancient Jews understood these Words, as spoken of the Messiah: For when Jesus asked them, how they understood it could be proper for *David* to call him Lord, as he does here, who was to be his Son (*Mat. 22. 43, 44, 45.*) they could not say for answer, that *David* in this Verse means some other Person, because indeed they understood the Messiah to be the Person spoke of here. And, if so, then 'is here Prophesied concerning him, that he should sit on the right hand of God. According to this Opinion of the Jews in our Saviours time, some of the later ones do also understand these words to be spoken of the Messiah, tho they obstinately refuse to believe them fulfill'd in Jesus. One says, that in time to come, God shall place Messiah the King at his right Hand, as it is witten in *Psal. 110.* Another says, hereafter God Holy and Blessed, shall set the Messiah on his right

hand, as it is written in *Psal. 110.* *The Lord said unto my Lord, &c.* (*Pearson on Creed*) More then this I think need not be added to this matter.

I proceed now to the Third thing intended, which is to review and produce briefly the History and Proof of the Ascension of Jesus, and his sitting at the right hand of God.

When the time drew nigh, that he would Ascend into Heaven, he commanded his Disciples to return from *Galilee*, where he had cheifly converst with them since his Resurrection; and to come to *Jerusalem*, where we now find them (*Act. 1. 4.*) from thence he lead them out as far as to *Bethany*; not to that Town, but to an equal distance with that from *Jerusalem*, on some part of the Mount *Olivet* (*Luke 24. 50. Act. 1. 12.*) Those whom he thus led out, we may believe, were not all those that believed on him; but those especially who were of his Kindred and Family, and whom he had chosen to be the chief Witnesses to the World of his Resurrection and Ascension (*Act. 1. 14, 21.*) It is reasonably judg'd, that the Number of Persons mention'd in the 15th Verse of that Chapter, which were an Hundred and Twenty, were at least the Company whom he Assembled, and led out to be Eye-witnesses of his Ascension. When he was come to the place intended, and while he was taking his leave, in a kind and gracious Blessing of them (*Luk. 24. 50.*) He was lifted up: They saw him sensibly Ascend, and follow'd him with their Eyes, as long as they could, looking stedfastly

to-

towards Heaven as he went up (*Acts. 1. 10.*) They look'd after him, till a Cloud receiv'd him out of their sight (*Acts 1. 9.*) and continued gazing towards that, till two of his bright Retinue, the Angels, who attended his Triumphant Ascension, awaked them, as we may say, out of their astonishment, and said, *Ye Men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall come again in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven,* (*Acts 1. 10, 11.*) Thus these Angels testified together with the intimation of their Sences, that Jesus was Ascended into Heaven. As for his Sitting or Being at the right hand of God there; the best proof of that, is, his sending the Holy Ghost at the time of Pentecost, which was soon after his Ascension. Yet we have also one said to be an Eye-witness of this, and that is the Blessed First Martyr St. Stephen; of whom we are told (*Acts 7. 53.*) that as he stood before the Council of the Jews, *He being full of the Holy Ghost looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;* and he said this, in Verse 56. the meaning of which words must be, he saw the Glorified Jesus attended with such Circumstances, as evidently shew'd his Supream and Universal Dominion. This may suffice for History and Proof of the matter of Fact of the Ascension of Jesus.

I come in the last place, to apply the Discourse to its due Use and Improvement; in doing which I shall briefly represent. (1.) What

hopes of our attaining the Happiness of Heaven are herein afforded us. (2.) What things those glorious hopes do oblige us to.

1. In the first place, Let us observe what hopes of our attaining the Happiness of Heaven are herein afforded us ; which will yield us a very pleasing and delightful prospect.

This shews us that our Nature is actually admitted into Heaven ; from whence we may conclude, this is a thing possible to be ; that our Nature is capable of the blissful presence of God, and can dwell with joy and delight amidst the Glory of Heaven.

And if we consider Jesus Christ, as having entred into that happy Place, as a reward of having pleased God on Earth : We may look upon it as the Reward and Advancement which was prepar'd for Man, at the first Creation of him ; which our Saviour speaks of, as *the Kingdom prepar'd for us from the begining of the World* ; to which it was originally intended, if Man had remain'd Innocent, he should have been translated after a time of Holy and Virtuous living on Earth : And this may help us to expect the same Advancement, as the reward of our well-doing.

If we consider Jesus as a Sacrifice for our Sins in his Death : Then his Resurrection from the Grave, and Ascension into Heaven may assure us, that he has made a full attonement for Sin ; and so the forfeiture of this Happiness, which we lay under by our sin is remov'd : And thus the greatest hindrance of our Happiness and Salvation is taken away.

Further,

Further, when we consider that Happiness possess by him in the Name, and for the sake of his Followers; we may reckon, that it is possible for us to have a Right, and Claim to it: To come to look upon it as an Inheritance and Portion purchased for us; and which we may expect from the Justice and Promise of God: This hopeful expectation of it we may entertain, if we are true to the Gospel Covenant; the Covenant which we entered into at our Baptism. Hereby we maintain such an Union to him as that of Members to the Head, and may expect our Ascension into Heaven too, because he has promised, that where he is, there such Persons also shall be.

And when from our own weakness, and the many temptations that surround us, we might justly doubt our sufficiency to be stedfast in that Covenant, and might fear lest we should fall short of our Duty and this Glory: The Ascension of Jesus Christ our Mediator gives us Assurance, that we have a tender and Compassionate Advocate with the Father; by whom we may hope to obtain Grace sufficient to assist us in all our Conflicts with the Flesh, the World, and the Devil; and by whom we may obtain the Pardon of those known defects and sins, which we particularly repent of; and also of those involuntary and unobserved Errors which at any time we may be guilty of. These are the grounds of Hope which we have of attaining Everlasting Happiness in the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ into Heaven.

2. In the next place, Let us take notice at present, and always remember, what Obligations those glorious Hopes do lay upon us. And certainly it is very fit, that we do often and seriously consider what great and glorious things we may come to: We should frequently, and with great pleasure, meditate on the Happiness we may attain; reflect upon the possibility of attaining it, and consider this, as what we may reach, if we will. Every Man may say to himself, Whatever I am in this low Earth, I may be hereafter an Inhabitant of Heaven. *Tho* I am one of the highest among Mankind, a Prince on Earth, yet I may be much more advanced; I may attain the greater Honour, of being my self one of the Retinue of Jesus the King of Heaven. If I am poor on Earth, I may be rich above. If I am now mean and despised, and must herd with the lowest of Men, yet may I, hereafter, be a Companion of Angels and dwell in the presence of God.

And then, Ought not such Thoughts to inspire us with earnest Desires to attain this Happiness? Shall we think of this, without wishing for it? Do I indeed love my self, (a Man might say hereupon) do I desire my own Happiness, and should I not desire and aim at the greatest Happiness that I may be advanced to? Are Pleasures, Riches and Honours, alluring things; even the poor, low, transitory ones of this World; and are there not Charms enough to engage me in the high and eternal ones of Heaven?

We should think of this glorious Happiness to which Jesus is ascended, and learn to despise the alluring Trifles of this World; and resolve, that nothing here shall detain our Minds from the frequent thinking on that; nor divert our Endeavours from the diligent and earnest pursuit of that.

It ought to be our chief Concern and Care, to attain that Happiness, to be look'd upon as the most Important Business of our Lives; and therefore every other Business should be so follow'd as is consistent with a due pursuit, and with the hopes of that.

It ought to be every Man's great Enquiry, What Grounds he has to hope, that he shall ascend with Jesus to Heaven. And he that finds himself in such a condition, as that he cannot hope for this, should be very restless till he can hope for it. Every such Person ought, without delay, to break off his Sins by Repentance, and betake himself to the following of Jesus in the Exercises of Piety and Virtue. When such a Happiness may be had, we should be diligent to fit our selves for it; be very careful to secure it, and very solicitous to see, that our hopes of it are well grounded and assured.

I shall conclude with the Apostle's advice: Let us most earnestly desire, let us chiefly seek and endeavour for *those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God.*

To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THE

THE PRAYER.

Great God! Thou art Infinite and Bounteous Goodness, and from thence didst make every thing at first very good. All thy Works were perfect and pleasing to thy self; And all things that were capable of Happiness were possest of it. A great an noble degre of Happiness it pleased thee to design Mankind for, and make him capable to attain: Thou didst originally design him to dwell in thy Presence, and to rejoice for ever in the enjoyment of thy infinite Love. But, alas, we have wofully sinned against thee, and have depraved and debased our selves. And instead of the Happiness and Kingdom prepared for us, we are deservedly doom'd to the Everlasting Punishment and Misery which was prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels. This is a very deplorable fall to our Nature, but we must submit to it, and must needs say, Righteous art thou O Lord, and Just are all thy Judgments. We fall down and abase our selves before thee, in a sense of our guilt, we condemn, we abhor our selves. And we fly to the hope set before us, to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant: Who is the Propitiation for our Sins, and our Advocate with the Father; who sits at thy right Hand, and ever lives to make intercession for us. We praise thee, O Lord, for thine Inestimable Love, in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ: We praise thee for his humble Incarnation, and Birth in our Nature, whereby he was made subject to the Law for us. We praise thee for the Meritorious Sacrifice of his Death, whereby he was a propitiation for the Sins of Men. We praise thee for his Resurrection from the Dead, whereby thou

thou didst graciously declare the Acceptance of his Sacrifice on our behalf, and dost give us hopes to find favour with thee: We praise thee for his Glorious Ascension into Heaven, and his sitting at the Right Hand of God, whereby he has taken possession of the Happiness above for us, and is possesst of full Power and Authority to dispence to us the purchases of his precious Death, and to bring us also to Glory, upon the Terms of the Gospel. Oh Lord for the sake of this Jesus, the Christ, Pardon to us all our past Offences, remember not against us former Iniquities: Give us unfeigned Repentance, and receive us into Favour. And grant us, O Lord, the Grace to die unto Sin, and to live unto Righteousness. Help us to cleanse our selves from all filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, and to perfect Holiness in thy Fear. Grant that as we do believe thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, to have ascended into the Heavens; so we may in heart and mind thither ascend, setting our Affections on things above, not on things on the Earth. And so guide us by thy Grace and good Spirit here, that we may steadily follow him, and may come at length to be with him where he is, and may with him continually dwell, who Liveth and Reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, one God, World without end.

We heartily pray to thee, O Lord, that the Kingdome of Jesus Christ may be extended over all the Earth, and that the Heathen may be given to him for his Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for his possession. We pray for the good Estate of the Catholick Church, that it may be guided by thy good Spirit according to the Laws of the Gospel, that it may flourish in all true Piety and Vertue, and may enjoy tranquility and Peace. We humbly recommend to thy Mercy the Land of our Nativity. Pardon, O Lord, our Iniquities, and let them not withhold good things from us: Grant us always to enjoy the blessed Ordinances of thy Gospel, and to find a sweet and mighty Influence of them upon our hearts, and to express

press it in our Lives. And we pray thee be our defence against all the Enemies of thy true Religion Established among us. Blest, in particular, our most Gracious King, and all the Royal Family, beflow upon them all Temporal and Spiritual Blessings, the happiness of this Life on Earth, and that of a better whenever they remove hence ; Let us be blest in their Wisdom, Goodness, Clemency, Justice ; and let them be blest in our ready Dury and Obedience. Be merciful to all that are related to us, and lead them in the way everlasting. We give thee thanks, O Lord, for all the means of Grace which we enjoy, and for the hopes of Glory : Grant that we may be considerably advanced in all Grace, and in those Glorious Hopes by the Ordinances, which we have this day enjoy'd, and that we may persevere in both to the end of our Lives. We humbly commit our selves to thy Care and merciful Protection this Night ; keep we pray thee, both our Souls and Bodies both now and ever more from all Evil, and bring them at last to thy Heavenly Kingdom, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. In whose Name we make all our requestes, and farther pray as he hath taught us.

*O*UR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil : For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

The Communion OF THE HOLY GHOST EXPLAIN'D; AND The Means to Obtain it REPRESENTED.

Let us Pray.

PRevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

2 Cor. 13, 14, later part.
*And the Communion of the Holy Ghost
be with you all.*

THE Holy Church does at this season require of us, to commemorate, with Joy and Thankfulness, the Coming of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, into this World, to carry on the Work of Man's Redemption and Salvation:

tion: Because it was at this season that he made his most remarkable and considerable descent for this purpose. It was at the time of the Jewish Pentecost, next after our blessed Saviour's Passion and Death, that the Apostles and Witnesses of his Resurrection and Ascension, were all, with one accord, in one place, (Acts 2. 1, &c.) And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a rushing mighty Wind, and it filled all the House where they were sitting. And there appear'd unto them cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. When the Fame of this wonderful thing was noised abroad in Jerusalem, and the Multitudes gather'd together to see and hear them, and were in a doubtful amazement at what they observ'd, St. Peter gives them a large account of it: He tells them, it was what had been foretold by the Prophet Joel: Then he preaches to them concerning the Resurrection of Jesus; and after he had shewn them, that this was foretold, he adds also, (Ver. 32, 33.) *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, (says he) he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.* This descent of this Divine Person into our World, it is very fit we should particularly remember, since even we are greatly concern'd in it. For we have in this a glorious and most comfortable assurance of our Saviour's ascension

sion into Heaven, and of his sitting at the right hand of God: For this is it which he said he would obtain, and afford upon his Exaltation to that Dignity and Glory. And it proves him true and faithful to perform his Promises, and worthy that we believe, and rely upon all that he has said. It proves him kind still too, and concern'd for our Salvation, tho he is gone into Heaven; still mindful of our Interests and Necessities, and to promote our happiness. It shews him also able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him. Farther, it was by virtue of this descent of the Holy Ghost, that the right knowledge of Salvation came to be dispers'd into all Nations of the Earth: And so it came to pass that we, who are of the Race of the *Gentiles*, were made acquainted with the true happiness of Mankind, and the true and only way to obtain it. Thus were the Rebellious, and we among the rest, made obedient, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Now the best and most agreeable manner doubtless of our Celebrating this Divine Person's most signal descent, is to take notice of the ends of his coming into our World: To observe what Gifts he comes chiefly to offer and bestow; and to excite our desires after them, and dispose ourselves to receive them, that so we may duly comply with the end of his coming.

These words of the Apostle Saint *Paul*, which I have read to you, are part of a Prayer which he made for the Church of *Corinth*, and for all the Saints which were in all *Achaea*. He

makes this request for the People, as well as for the Priests of that Church. For we find them all concern'd in the Epistle, by the first Chapter and Verse of it, which directs it to them all. He does in these words make a distinct address to each Person in the Sacred Trinity, and implores the Peculiar Favour of each: That Favour which each Divine Person is pleased to afford towards the Salvation of Man; and herein he allows, and justifies such a way of address. He beggs for those Christians the Love of God the Father; and that they might attain this by the Grace of Jesus Christ the Son of God, by being Partakers in his merits, and by the Blessed Communications of the Holy Spirit; for this is what he means by *the Communion of the Holy Ghost*; he prays that they might receive those Gracious Operations or Communications of that ever blessed Spirit, which give Men an Interest in the purchased Grace of Christ, and which fit us for, and bring us to the Possession of the Love of God the Father, which in its highest exercise and degree, is our final and compleat Salvation and Happiness.

These Communications of the Holy Spirit I am at present to discourse upon, because 'tis requisite, that I confine my self to my Text: And since that relates to all those of the Church of *Corinth*, as well the People as the Pastors, we may conclude, that the Communications or Gifts, which the Apostle chiefly means here, are those which are common to all Christians, and are necessary and useful to their Salvation.

These

These are usually call'd the *Ordinary Gifts* of the Spirit, to distinguish them from those which were given only during the times of the first planting of Christianity in the World, and for the better planting, and propagating of it; such as the gift of Inspired Knowledge of Divine things, the Gift of unstudied Prayer, the Gift of working Miracles, the Gift of Healing, the Gift of Speaking and Understanding divers Languages, and the like. These are justly call'd *Extraordinary Gifts*, because they were given for an extraordinary purpose, which was to Convert the World to Christianity: And because they are not the Common Gifts of the Spirit, which he came chiefly to bestow, and which are necessary and usefull to the Salvation of those who possess them. This our Saviour does evidently teach us, in *Mat. 7. 21, 22, 23.* Where he tells us, that some of those who had enjoy'd, and exercised these Gifts, shall be found among the Workers of Iniquity, at the great Day of Judgment and Tryal; and shall be therefore rejected from the happiness of his Favour and Presence for ever. And they may be call'd extraordinary too, because, as it is evident they are ceased, so we may learn from the Apostle, that it was intended they should not continue always in the Church. For it is very probable, that this is what he means, when he says, *Whether there be Propheſies they ſhall fail*, meaning the Gift of Unstudied Prayer, and Praising of God: *Whether there be Tongues they ſhall ceafe*, the Gift of speaking divers Languages: *Whether*

ther there be Knowledge it shall Vanish away; that is, the Gift of Inspired Knowledge, such as was in those times attain'd by some, without Education and Study, (1 Cor. 13. 8.) For we may suppose him speaking in the following words of the grown state of the Church on Earth, to which those things would in some measure belong, when it should be past the weaknes, and Childhood, of its first planting, should abound in Knowledge, and be rooted and confirm'd in Faith and Love, and so should no longer need those extraordinary Gifts. And he mētions in the close of his Discourse those Gifts, and Communications of the Spirit, which should for ever abide in the Church, when the other should be ceased. *Now there remains, says he, Faith, Hope, and Charity, and the greatest of these is Charity.* It is apparent that he does not design to speak only of the perfect Felicity of the Saints, tho his Thoughts carried him to hint at that, because he mentions Faith and Hope as remaining, both which we know the final Fruition does put an end to.

I shall now proceed in the following method of Discourse.

1. I shall express somewhat particularly, What Gifts, or Communications of the Holy Spirit they are, which may be commonly expect-ed by Christians, and which we may seek after.

2. What are the Operations of this Divine Spirit about these.

3. What we must do to obtain those Blef-fed Operations.

In the first place, I shall somewhat particu-larly

larly mention, what are those Gifts or Communications of the Holy Spirit, which we may expect and receive from him, and which are afforded promiscuously to all Good Christians, as being necessary to our Salvation. These are, indeed, all the whole Catalogue of Glorious Graces which Constitute, and Adorn an Excellent Christian. But it would be too long a task to speak of them all particularly in this Discourse. I shall therefore content myself to mention only two of these; but they shall be such to which the rest may be reduced, as included in the full Latitude of these; and these are Faith and Love. Under these two Names the Holy Scripture it self does sum up, and comprehend, all that which goes to the Constituting of a good Christian: In saying, *That in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision avail-eth anything, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by Love, (Gal. 5. 6.)* And these are the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to Mankind.

1. Faith is the Gift of this Divine Person. By Faith I mean, a full, hearty, and powerful perswasion of those things reveal'd in the Gospel, the knowledge and belief of which is necessary to our Salvation. As it was requisite the Holy Spirit should reveal to us what we are to believe, so it was requisite also, that he should possess us with the belief of it. The mind of Man is in darkness, and Ignorant of the truths which should guide him to his Happiness. Whence 'tis said of us in general, *There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God: They are all gone out of*

the way, Rom. 3. 11: 12. And, besides our Ignorance of these things, we have a wretched aversion to them: Whence it is given as the Character of wicked Men, *That they say unto God depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy ways. Job 21. 14.* And our Saviour says of the Revelations of the Gospel, *That altho light be come into the World, yet do Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil, (John 3. 19.)* The Revelations of the Gospel condemn, and forbid the common Practices of the World, and are therefore commonly hated by Men. Thus we are disposed to reject them when they are propos'd to us.

And from both these causes there is a common carelessness among Men about the matters which concern their Salvation. And we commonly neither do know, nor do we mind or endeavour to know, wherein our true happiness consists, or the way to attain it. But the Holy Spirit, in working this Grace in us, awakens us to a very serious concern about these matters. He makes us sensible of our Guilt, and the Misery we are liable to: so he renders us humble and teachable, as they appeared at first to be in *Act 2.* who at St. Peters Sermon *Being pricked in their hearts, cried out to the Apostles, Men and Brethren, What shall we do?* Then he gives us a sense of the Importance of those Truths which are proposed to us, shews us how highly we are concerned in them, and convinces us, that we must be guided by, and obedient to them, if ever we would be sav'd. Then he makes us embrace those Truths,

Truths, and value and submit to them in the course of our Lives. Thus he brings Men to a true, lively, and saving Faith. And this Operation of the Holy Spirit, the Scripture means, when it says, *The Lord opened the heart of Lydea, that she attended to those things which were spoken by St. Paul,* Acts 16. 14. That is, She receiv'd and believ'd them: For the next Verse says, she was thereupon Baptised. In express terms does the Holy Scripture ascribe the Gift of Faith to this Divine Person, in calling it a Fruit of the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 22.* And this also is meant, when 'tis said, as in *Ephes. 2. 8. By Grace ye are saved through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.*

2. Another Gift of the Holy Spirit is Love to God. This also we are to our Guilt and Misery destitute of, in the fallen and corrupt state of our Nature. Therefore the Apostle says, *The carnal mind is enmity to God, and is not subject to his Law,* Rom. 8. 7. We naturally care not to think of him, we live as without God in the World, and put him as far from our thoughts as we can, and do not concern our selves to please or honour him. But the Holy Spirit cures this Monstrous, and unhappy distemper of our Minds. He discovers God to us as our chief Good, and his Favour as our only true Happiness. He makes us see and know the exercises of his Goodness, even in his Laws, and so to consent unto the Law, that it is Good. And so the Mind, that before cared not either for the Knowledge of God or his ways, now highly loves, and values both. And

It is the right fence of the rectified Soul, what the Psalmist says concerning God, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none on Earth, that I can desire besides thee,* (Psal. 73. 25.) And concerning the Law of God it can say, with another, *The Law of thy Mouth is better to me than thousands of Gold and Silver,* (Psal. 119. 72.) He will love God with all his Heart, with all his Soul, with all his Might, and with all his Strength. And this *Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* It produces many other Graces, and acts and exercises it self in and by them. And the working of this in us is also in Holy Scripture attributed to the Holy Spirit, as we may see, Rom. 5. 5. where the Apostle says to some Christians, *That the Love of God had been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, who had been given to them.* I doubt not, it is very agreeable to the design and scope of the Apostle's Discourse there, to understand him as speaking those words of our Love to God.

These are the two main Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are promiscuously given to good Christians, and which we may seek and expect to receive as necessary to our Salvation. And thus I have finish'd the first head of this Discourse. The second I am to insist upon is this; to shew, what are the Operations of the Holy Spirit about these Gifts or Graces: Which I think may at least be reduced to these three Heads following.

1. He Creates, or puts these Graces into us: He possesses us of them. The Holy Scripture speaks of his giving, and putting into us both these

these Graces, under the general terms of Washing and Sanctifying us. So 'tis said of some Christians, (*1 Cor. 6. 11.*) They were *Washed, and Sanctified by the Spirit of our God*, upon the account of his giving us these, we are said to be born of God. Hence the Apostle St. John says of those that have Charity, they are *born of God*, (*1 John 4. 7.*) And in the fifth Chapter of that Epistle, at the first Verse, *Whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*: So that the general term of Regeneration, or being born of God, may be reckon'd to include the happy Operations which possess us of these Graces. And this work, the Regenerating of us, our Saviour ascribes to the Holy Spirit, *John 3. 5.* in saying, *Except a Man be born of Water and of the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* For the sake of these Gifts, we are said to be *renewed by the Holy Ghost* (*Tit. 3. 5.*) And that renewing is said, to consist in *creating us in Righteousness and true Holiness*, (*Ephes. 4. 24.*) Holiness is a general Term, which may be sometimes understood to include all the Graces which belong to a good Christian. It is from this Person's undertaking this Part and Office, towards the bringing us to Salvation, that he is call'd the Holy Ghost or Spirit. As he is called Spirit, not so much in regard to his Nature, as in regard to his manner of proceeding from the Father and the Son, so also is he call'd Holy, not as being thereby distinguished from the Father and the Son, for they both are Holy too; but because the Sanctifying,

Utifying, and making us Holy is the part which he is pleased peculiarly to assume and appropriate to himself in the Work of our Redemption. Very fitly therefore, as a Learned Man observes, do the Hebrews call him sometimes, according to this Work and Office, the Spirit of Holiness : By which Name, as being the common Phrase and Speech of the Jews, the Apostle *Paul* calls him, *Rom. 1. 4.* (*Lightf. Vol. 1. p. 482.*)

2. Another Operation of the Holy Spirit about the Graces which he puts into us is, that he does continually excite, and stir up the Acts and Exercises of them : And thus does he maintain and increase them. It is for this, said, that *God works in us both to will and to do, Phil. 2. 13.* And the Apostle speaking of good Christians, says, *They are led by the Spirit, (Rom. 8. 14.)* This is that which the Psalmist prays for in such Petitions as these, *Order my steps in thy Word, and let no Iniquity have dominion over me : Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy Statutes :* And after a very grievous and horrid fall indeed, we find him praying to God thus, *Uphold me with thy free Spirit, Psal. 51. 12.* The Holy Spirit admonishes what is our duty in all circumstances, tells us what Virtues and Graces they require to be exercised, makes us willing and desirous to exercise them, and enables us to do so whenever they are exercised. He excites and stirs up all the Exercise of Grace that is in us, both in our Holy and virtuous Living, and in our devout and fervent Prayers. And to exercise Faith and Love, Humility

Humility and Heavenly Mindedness, and the like gracious qualifications in our Prayers, is to pray by the Spirit as much as we can now do it: And this is the best way of doing it, if these are the best Gifts of the Spirit, as the Apostle says they are. The Holy Spirit by the continual Exercise of Grace maintains it; and unless he did thus excite it upon all occasions it would languish and die, and the continual opposition which it meets with here from the World, the Flesh and the Devil, would soon oppress and destroy it. The Holy Spirit by the continual exercise of our Grace, makes us grow and increase in it: According to what is promised, *Mat. 25. 29. To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance;* and to what is said, in *Job 17. 9. The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger.*

3. The Holy Spirit assures and evidences to us the Graces which he has put into us, and thus he is also a Comforter. This Operation of the Spirit when we truly enjoy it, does always follow the former: And he shews the Graces which we have, by the Exercises of them. His consolations are not absolute and groundless, but are built upon an evident and rational Foundation. It is the presumption and pride of a Man that deceives himself, when any one fancies himself very good without doing good, and living well. The Fruits or Exercises of Grace are in Holy Scripture given as the Evidences and Proofs of it. In *1 John 3. 7, 10.* the Apostle says, *He that doth Righteousness is Right-*

Righteous, and the Children of God are Manifest by their abstaining from sin, and living well. So our Saviour says, A Tree is known by his fruit, Luk. 6. 44. To shew that Men must judge of themselves by the general course of their Thoughts, and Words, and Actions. The Holy Spirit evidences and assures to Men the Graces that are in them by the Testimony of a good Conscience; when they examine their course of Life by the rule of God's Word and Law, and find it well agreeing thereto: therefore it is said, The Spirit of God beareth witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God. (Rom. 8. 16.) And then he helps us to conclude, as the Apostle adds in the next Verse, that If we are Children, then are we Heirs too, Heirs of God, and joyn't Heirs with Jesus Christ. With the Evidence of his Grace in us, he gives us hope and confidence in God as in a wise, tender, and compassionate Father: And thus is he the Spirit of Adoption according to the 15th Verse of that Chapter. And with the Evidence of Grace, he gives us good hopes of Eternal Glory. These Sanctifying Gifts are therefore call'd the Earnest of our Inheritance, Eph. 1. 14. He possesses us with the comfortable expectation, that he who has begun a good work in us will maintain and compleat it: That the tender kindness of our Heavenly Father will pardon our unwilling failings, will heal our infirmities, and supply our wants and defects: That he will guide us by his counsel through this World, and after receive us to his Glory.

These are the kind and happy Operations of

of this Divine Person, the Holy Spirit, about those Graces and Virtues which Constitute a good Christian. And this may suffice to be spoken to the Second Head of Discourse.

I proceed now to the Third and Last, which is, to suggest what we have to do, that we may obtain, and constantly enjoy these Blessed Operations of the Holy Spirit. If any thing is to be done on our parts towards the obtaining or promoting these, 'tis very necessary for us to know what it is, that we may do it. And very evident it is from Holy Scripture, that God requires and expects we should employ our own endeavour after those saving Graces which the Holy Spirit is given to work in us. Hence are we bid to *Work out our own Salvation*. And we may observe, that altho' God promises to those who had sinned against him, and forsaken their Duty, that he would *give them a new heart, and put a new spirit into them, and cause them to walk in his Statutes, and keep his Judgments*, (*Ezek. 36. 26, 27.*) yet to the same sinful People he also says by the same Prophet, (*Ezek. 18. 31.*) *Cast away from you all your Transgressions whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit.* He bids them do this for themselves, meaning, no doubt, that their own endeavour and care must be employ'd towards the accomplishing of such happy effects. There is something we must do, which we have a Natural Power to do; therefore he says to Sinners, *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doing, cease to do evil, learn to do well*, (*Isa. 1. 16, 17.*) and many such like Express.

Expressions and Exhortations the Scripture contains. The first beginning of his Operation in us is, to excite in us good desires, and some motions of will towards those Graces and Virtues. These he excites in us by representing and recomending these Graces to us, either by the good examples of other Men, or by the descriptions of them, the Exhortations, Encouragements to practice them, which his Word and Sacraments present us with. And in this beginning he does indeed prevent us by his special Grace. But we our selves may contribute something towards this in applying our selves to use the appointed means of Grace which he affords us. And after he has begun the good work in us, he carries it on by our selves, by the exercise of our own thoughts, endeavours, and care towards the cherishing, maintaining and improving those good Impressions, and the bringing them to fruit and perfection: These things following, then, are what we must do towards our enjoying these saving Operations of the Holy Spirit upon us.

1. We must diligently attend upon the Publick Ordinances of the Gospel, the Preaching of the Word and the Sacraments. These are the appointed means of conveying his Grace. 'Tis said, *Faith comes by hearing*, (*Rom. 10.17.*) And our Saviour ascribes to Baptism the conveyance of Regenerating Grace, *John 3.5.* when he says, *a Man must be born of Water, and of the Spirit.* The same thing the Apostle intimates too, when he calls this the *washing of Regenera-*

Regeneration, and says, we are saved by this, and the renewing of the *Holy Ghost*, *Tit. 3. 5.* Of the Lord's Supper, *St. Paul* says, It is the *Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*, *1 Cor. 10. 16.* by which he means, that in the use of this the *Holy Spirit* conveys, and bestows on Men the saving renewing Graces which are the purchases of Christ's precious Death. Here then we must wait, in the diligent use of these Ordinances and Means of Grace, that we may enjoy the *Spirit's Operations* upon us. And that is encourag'd in *Prov. 8. 34.* where wisdom says, *Blessed is he that heareth me watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors:* He that neglects no opportunity of using the means of *Wisdom and Virtue*.

2. We must earnestly and patiently pray for these Operations of the *Holy Spirit*. This also does he himself direct us to do in *Holy Scripture*. In *Luke 11. 13.* Our Saviour says, *God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* Prayer for this is therein made necessary; so is it again, *James 1.5.* where the *Apostle* says, *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God, who gives to all Men liberally, and upbraids not, and it shall be given him.* The same thing is intimated too, in that our Saviour says, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled.* Such eager desire is necessary to obtain, and such shall obtain: And such desire must needs be very importunate and craving. Till we obtain we should persevere to ask. Our Saviour put forth a *Parable*, we are told, to teach, *That Men*

Men ought always to pray, and not to faint, (Luke 18. 1.) So the Apostle bids us pray without ceasing, (1 Thes. 5. 17.) which places may justly encourage us to unwearied Supplications, at least, for spiritual and saving Graces.

3. We must set our selves frequently to a private, and deliberate Meditation on the things reveal'd to us in the Word of God. This is requisite and useful towards our living well, and therefore to our obtaining the Grace of God. *Joshua was commanded to meditate in the Law day and night, that he might do well, (Josh. 1. 8.) And the Psalmist pronounces him blessed, who frequently meditates on the Law of God, because such an one, he says, shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, bringing forth Fruit in due season, (Psal. 1.)* When we separate our selves from worldly busines, and invite good thoughts and motions by reading the Holy Scriptures, or some good Books, we dispose and prepare our selves for the Holy Spirit; and he who waits, and desires to do us good, will not fail to meet us when we regularly seek him, and are prepar'd to entertain him. Meditation cherishes the good motions of the Spirit; in this we cooperate with him. Whenever he works in us, he does it by engaging, and employing our own thoughts about those important matters, which ought to influence and govern us.

4. Lastly, Together with all that has been said, we must make it our great care, that we do not by any thing, grieve or offend the good Spirit of God. He will not dwell with us,

us, if we do not use him with due Reverence and Respects. We must not think it is no matter how we behave our selves towards him, or that he will bless us with his saving Operations however we regard him. It is sufficient caution against this which the Apostle gives, when he says, *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of Redemption,* (Ephes. 4. 30.) He may be so offended as to forsake us, and leave us to Wickedness and Perdition. Let us carefully observe, then, what would so offend him, and avoid it: which I shall briefly represent in the following particulars.

1. We must not listen, or yield to any temptations to Sin. These must be carefully avoided as much as we may, and stedily resisted when we cannot avoid them. It is a dangerous presumption to put our selves wantonly and needlessly into a state of Temptation, and gives him provocation to withdraw his Care and Assistance. But especially will it displease him to yield to a Temptation, and let it draw us into Sin. The Holy Spirit is displeased at our entertaining any sinful impurities; and when we defile his Temple we provoke him to forsake it. The unhappy *David* did not well consider this, when he sinn'd in the matter of *Uriah*. But we find him afterwards sensible of it, and afraid lest the Holy Spirit should abandon him. And in his repentance for those Sins, he particularly prays, that he might not suffer this greatest Punishment, (Psal. 51. 11.) *Cast me not away from thy presence*

Sence, (says he) take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

2. We must take a great deal of care, that we do not neglect the good Motions of the Holy Spirit, and let them pass unobserv'd; and that we do not reject and refuse them. And there is the more need of our watchfulness and care in this case, because we are liable to slight and refuse his good motions when we are not sensible that we do so. The Holy Spirit often moves upon our minds in such a way, that his operations are not be distinguished from the natural Operations of our own minds, and the Exercise of our own thoughts. Sometimes these are offer'd us under the cover, as we may say, of the Counsel and Advice of a Friend: And perhaps even with the reproaches and upbraiding of an Enemy. And they are usually offer'd in the Administrations of his Word and Sacraments. And the misery and folly of Man is great by reason that he does not discern him often times in these things; and so he slight and refuses his good motions, under the name of somewhat else. This, then, should be a general Rule with us: To slight and refuse no good motions, by what means or way soever they may come to offer themselves to us.

3. We must not delay or put off our compliance with the good motions he offers to excite in us. For to do this is to offend him to. He expects and requires a ready and speedy compliance with him. To put off and delay this, is as much as to say, I will not at this time

time obey him, I will not yet be good. And this has prov'd fatal to many Souls. They have put off the Holy Spirits Convictions till another time ; and perhaps the displeasure of God has not let them live till that time : Or if they have done so, they have been by that time hardened in their Sins ; the Holy Spirit often offended with their delay, is withdrawn ; and now they have no will to amend and become Religious : And so, after all, they die in their Sins unrepented of, which all along they proposed to themselves they would take care not to do. Let us comply with the Holy Spirit's motions while they are offer'd, because we know not if we delay to do so, whether they will ever be offer'd us again or not. God has very plainly said, *His Spirit shall not always strive with Man.*

4. Lastly, we must especially take care, that we be never lifted up with Pride, when we reflect upon the Grace we have received. We must avoid the trusting in our own Strength, the undertaking any Duty, or any conflict with Temptation without earnest addresses to Heaven for the Assistance of the Holy Spirit ; or without relying more upon that than our own sufficiency. We must also avoid the ascribing to our selves any good that we have done, the applauding and admiring our selves. We must always exercise the Apostles Humility, who ascribes all his Vertues and good Actions to the Grace of God, *1 Cor. 15. 10. By the Grace of God I am what I am, (says he.)* We must, further, avoid the despising or hating our Neigh-

bour, because we think him not so well instructed in Religion, or not so improv'd in Grace and Vertue as our selves. We should consider, it is the free Grace of God, which has made any difference that there is between us. We must exercise compassion to him in his Errour, bear one anothers Infirmitiess: And if any one be overtaken with a fault, they which are Spiritual, must not disdain or hate him for this, but endeavour to restore and recover him with the Spirit of meekness considering our selves, lest we also be tempted, as the Apostle advises, (Gal. 6. 1.) These are the symptoms and exercises of Pride in this case which we must avoid, if we would be so happy our selves as to enjoy the perpetual presence, and good influences of the Holy Spirit upon us. Let us consider, the Scripture says of God, *He knows the proud afar off: And God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* And when it is said, *God regardeth the lowly, and the meek will be guide in Judgment, the meek he will teach his way:* These expressions may assure us, that the Holy Spirit requires a meek and humble disposition and state of mind, where he will dwell and bestow his Divine Gifts and Operations. We must take great care, then, at all times, that no instance of Pride do displease him, and provoke him to abandon us.

This is the course which we must observe, to enjoy the Blessed saving Operations of the Holy Spirit. And certainly for so happy, so important, and so necessary Favours it is highly worth our while to do all that we can. Which God

God of his Infinite Mercy grant we may do, and with great success, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ: To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, and Glory, World without End. *Amen.*

THE PRAYER.

A Lmighty and most Glorious God! Oh God the Holy Ghost who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us miserable Sinners. We must with shame before thee confess, that we are dark and ignorant, weak and foolish, polluted and guilty. We cannot of our selves do any thing that is good, and we find a lamentable proneness in us to do Evil: Too often, and too easily are we led captive by the Laws of Sin and Death. We condemn, we abhor our selves before thee for these things; and are exceedingly griev'd and weary'd with the burthen of our Sins. We humbly present our selves unto thee, who art, O Lord, the Lover, and the great Physician of our Souls, who hast the words of Eternal Life. Oh quicken our dead Souls unto a New and Divine Life. Let us be transformed into what is most pleasing to thee by the renewing of our minds. O Lord, illuminate us with all necessary and saving Knowledge, grant us to have a right Judgment in all things, give us a lively and effectual Faith, such as may purifie our Hearts and govern our Lives: Shed abroad the Love of God in our Hearts; fill us we humbly beseech thee with Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, and whatever thou delightest in: That we may ever be pleasing to thee, and may ever enjoy thy happy Presence,

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T H E P R A Y E R.

A Lmighty and most Glorious God! Oh God the Holy Ghost who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us miserable Sinners. We must with shame before thee confess, that we are dark and ignorant, weak and foolish, polluted and guilty. We cannot of our selves do any thing that is good, and we find a lamentable proneness in us to do Evil: Too often, and too easily are we led captive by the Laws of Sin and Death. We condemn, we abhor our selves before thee for these things, and are exceedingly griev'd and weary'd with the burthen of our Sins. We humbly present our selves unto thee, who art, O Lord, the Lover, and the great Physician of our Souls, who hast the words of Eternal Life. Oh quicken our dead Souls unto a New and Divine Life. Let us be transformed into what is most pleasing to thee by the renewing of our minds. O Lord, illuminate us with all necessary and saving Knowledge, grant us to have a right Judgment in all things, give us a lively and effectual Faith, such as may purifie our Hearts and govern our Lives: Shed abroad the Love of God in our Hearts; fill us we humbly beseech thee with Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, and whatever thou delightest in: That we may ever be pleasing to thee, and may ever enjoy thy happy Presence,

and Communion. Pardon, O Lord, we humbly beseech thee all our Affronts of thee, all our neglects of thy good Motions, our opposition and resistance to thy Grace, which we now most heartily deplore; and with great indignation condemn our selves for them. And from henceforth be thou pleased to take possession of us, to dwell in us: Chace out of us all thine Enemies, and whatsoever is displeasing to thee. Let no Iniquity have dominion over us. Inable us to mortifie the deeds of the Body, that we may not obey the dictates and lusts of that, but may be always ready and disposed to obey thy Godly Motions. Let us be fill'd with Righteousnes, who hunger and thirst after it, while we diligently seek and wait for it in attendance upon thy Sacred Ordinances.

Oh Adorable and Blessed Spirit! We pray thee have pity upon the wretched World which lies in Wickedness, and find out ways effectually to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Drive away every evil tyrannous Spirit, and rule thou in the Hearts of Men, that Order and Peace may flourish in the World, and Mankind may Adore and Praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and love one another. Bless the Christian Church with an abundant measure of thy Grace; that all those who call themselves Christians may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things: Purge thy Church we pray thee from all false Doctrine, Heresie, and Schism, from Envy, Hatred, Malice, and all Uncharitableness. We pray thee bless these Nations unto which we belong, and prosper that part of thy Church planted among us; Let the Gates of Hell never prevail against it. Let us ever plentifully enjoy thy pure Ordinances, and give them a mighty Influence, and Power amongst us to the promoting of all true Piety and Virtue: Grant us always to live in thy Love and Peace, that the God of Love and Peace may be with us. We pray thee dwell abundantly in our Sayereign Lord the King, and in all that are set in Authority under him, that they may truly and

and indifferently minister Justice to the punishment of Wickedness and Vice, and the maintenance and promoting of thy true Religion and Vertue. Dwell in the Bishops, and Pastors of our Church, that they may be burning and shining Lights in their several Stations ; Faithful, and Industrious in the discharge of their Office ; in all things a good Example to the Flock, and Instrumental to turn many to Righteousnes. We pray thee posleſt the Hearts of all our Relations, Friends, and Benefactors, and even of our Enemies ; forgive them and turn their Hearts : Make us duly thankful for all thy Mercies, for those of this day in particular : Grant us to make a right and good use of all. Keep us we pray thee in safety this Night, and be our Guide and Counsellor all our Days ; Let us rejoice evermore in thy moſt Holy Comfort. All we ask through the Mediation of Jesuſ Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be Honour, and Glory, Word without End.

O UR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil : For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

THE Future Punishments REPRESENTED.

Let us Pray.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Matth. 25. 46. former part.
And these shall go away into Everlasting Punishment.

OUR Blessed Saviour having, from the 31st Verse of this Chapter, given a large and particular account of the great Day of Universal Judgment: He sets down in this Verse, what will be the important Issue and Result of it. This, he says, shall be, that those who are Wicked *shall go away into Everlasting Punishment*: And those who shall be found Righteous in that Day, shall be received *into Everlasting Life*, or Happiness. These two different

rent Fates will be the event of the Last Judgment, and will include all Mankind. To one or other of these do all Humane Actions tend, and every one of us must be finally disposed. In a few words has our Saviour here comprehended, what all that we can say of them cannot fully express. And tho these things are soon spoken so generally, yet it will require an eternity to gain any proportionable conception of them. But we may now, if we will consider these things well, understand and conceive so much of them as to see, that the evils on the one side are incomparably greater, and more terrible than all the Afflictions and Calamities of this Life ; and that the good things on the other side do as much excel all the good things of this World : Which to know and consider well is highly necessary, and may be very useful to us. If we apprehend those to be the greatest evils, and good things which shall finally and eternally reward our evil and good Actions in this Life (as upon a due consideration of them we cannot chuse but do) then we shall be most concern'd to avoid the one sort, and obtain the other of them ; which is the true Wisdom and Interest of this our present Life.

At present let us consider, that which is represented in our Text, the final sad Portion of wicked Men : *These shall go away into everlasting Punishment.* Which words present us with these two Heads of Meditation ; the future Punishment of sinners, and the duration of that Punishment ; so that, they require I should insist upon

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upon these two Heads of Discourse on this Subject.

1. To represent what will be the final Punishment of wicked Men.

2. To shew the Importance and Truth of what is here said of it, That it will be Everlasting.

At this time I shall represent, as fully as I can in a short Discourse, what will be the final Punishment of Wicked Men. And I shall leave out all that has been said to this matter, which seems to have no Foundation, but uncertain conjecture, and keep to the Intimations of Holy Scripture concerning it. But let us, I beseech you, apply very serious and attentive Thoughts to so important a Subject: We are going to enquire, what will be the certain end and consequence of a life of Wickedness: To see what a dismal Fate many thousands of careless, and obstinate sinners have already brought themselves to; and what every wretched Man who lives in any known, willful, and presumptuous Sin is also tending to. We are now to look by Faith into the Eternal Prisons of the Damned, that we may by this view be deterr'd from following those ways which lead to Perdition: That by seeing the sad end of other Mens Folly we may learn Wisdom; and that their Misery may occasion our Happiness. Now from the Holy Scriptures, we are allow'd to represent the future Punishments under these Three Heads.

1. The Conditions or Nature of the Place of Punishment.

2. The

2. The sad and uncomfortable Society which will be there.

3. The State and Disposition of Mind which every Damned Person will be for ever under.

Let us consider First, What is the Nature and Condition of the place of Punishment which is prepar'd for Sinners, according to what the Holy Scripture tells us concerning it. And since it is a place of Punishment, where Divine Almighty Justice executes deserved Wrath and Vengeance, we may justly believe it must needs be a very dismal place. It was first prepar'd we are told for the Devil and his Angels. When they rebell'd against their Maker, and Sovereign, and became unworthy to hold any longer the Honour and Happiness of his Presence and Glory in Heaven, then was this place prepar'd to receive them; where they are to be punish'd as their Wickedness does deserve. And without doubt, the nature and state of the Place is such, as to be very suitable to such a Design. And there are two things, the most certain and considerable, which the Holy Scripture expressly, and particularly tells us concerning this Place.

1. That it is a place of horrid Darkness. Our Saviour, speaking of the final Punishment which the hardened unbelieving Jews should bring themselves to, says, They should be cast into *outer Darkness*, (Mat. 8. 12.) In the 30th Verse of this Chapter, He teaches us under the Person of the Wicked and Unprofitable Servant, That Wicked Men shall after the Trial of the Last Judgment, be cast into *outer Darkness*.

ness. St. Jude also speaks of *Darkness*, as that which Punishes Apostate Angels, in the 6th Verse of his Epistle, and shall punish Wicked Men, in the 13th Verse, *To whom*, he says, *is reserved the Blackness of Darkness for ever*. If we understand these places literally it is but reasonable; since they represent the place but such as is very suitable to the design of it. 'Tis a place of Punishment, and Misery; and Darkness, is suitable to such a Design. Light is a cheerful pleasant thing; but Darkness is melancholy and sad. Without doubt a very bright Light, or Glory, will Adorn the Happy Mansions of Heaven, and make them the more happy: And so a dismal Darkness may be suppos'd to fully the deep Caves of Hell. We may imagine it, then, a place which shall never see the Light of this World's Sun or Moon: A horrid place which enjoys no other Light, than what may be afforded from smoaky Brimstone Fires. If not, perhaps, an absolute Darkness: Tho, because it is the darkest place which God has made, it is therefore by St. Jude call'd, according to an Hebrew phrase, the *Blackness of Darkness*. A gloomy dusky light we may suppose it has, because such an one seems to conduce more to the Horror of it, than a perfect Darkness would do. And besides, 'Tis more agreeable to that other property, which the Holy Scripture attributes to this sad place; which I come next to mention.

2. It is said to be fill'd with Fire. Our Saviour, in Mat. 18. 8. intimates, That the Punishment of Sinners hereafter will be *Everlasting*

lasting Fire. In the 41th Verse of this Chapter, he says, The Judge (who will be himself) shall at the last Judgment pronounce this sentence upon Wicked Men, *Depart from me ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire.* And the Apostle *Jude* says of those Sinners who were destroy'd in the Flames of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, That they are *Suffering the vengeance of Eternal Fire.* (Verse 7.) Which expression must be understood of what they now endure in the other World, not of those Flames which destroy'd them long ago in this World, (*Hammond in loc* and *Traet. Hell Torments*) There are some Difficulties in understanding this Fire literally ; but yet ye may do it, I think, without any Imposition upon our Reason. What a sort of Fire, indeed, it is, We must not pretend to say : But that it is very different from that which we are here acquainted with, must be allow'd from what is said of it. It is a Fire prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels ; who we suppose are meer Spirits, and therefore it is such, as is able to afflict a Spirit with a sence of Torment and Pain. And such, too, it must be, that it may affect and punish the seperate Souls of Men, while their Bodies yet remain dissolved into Dust : as St. *Jude* says, it does torment the Souls of the wretched People of *Sodom*. It is also a Fire which in its Nature is Everlasting, and therefore is of a different Nature from ours. This is a transient Perishing thing ; wasts its own Fuel and then dies it self : But that terrible Fire, tho it will exceedingly torment, yet it will never wast the Fuel it

it feeds upon, nor consume the Wicked Men and Devils, who shall be thrown into it: Nor will it ever languish or go out. It is a peculiar Fire for a peculiar terrible purpose; It is something the Divine Wrath has made to be his Instrument to punish and torment his rebellious Creatures: to afflict the Bodies and Souls of Wicked Men, and even Spirits which have no Bodies. We must suppose, then, the Wretched Creatures, who are thrown into Hell, to be plung'd into a mighty Sea of Flame: The Scripture calls it *a Lake of Fire and Brimstone*. We may suppose the Damned Wretches pierced through with Fire: Not only scorch'd on their out-side, but all within on Fire, as things that lie in a Furnace are. For this dreadful place is also called a *Furnace of Fire*, *Mat. 13. 42*. Oh how terrible a Place, and Punishment is prepar'd for Sinners! How *fearful a thing is it to fall into the Hands of the Living God!* *Who of us can dwell with devouring Fire!* *Who can endure Everlasting Burnings!*

These Conditions of this Place being, but such as are suitable to the design of it, we may understand them literally. But if any Obstinate refuse to do so, yet they must grant thus much: That as the Holy Scripture sets out to us the Joys and Felicities of Heaven, by things that are the most pleasant, and delightful of this World; and after all we are taught, that the Joys of Heaven do incomparably excel those things: So if it makes use of things which are the most sad and grievous in this World to represent the Future Punishments

by;

by ; we may reasonably suppose those Punishments will be much more grievous, than the things made use of to represent them are. And then, from the Darkness and Fires which are said to be in Hell, we may conclude, that there will be a dismal want of all Joy and Comfort there ; that 'tis a sad and melancholy place, altogether contriv'd for Horror : And that the unhappy Creatures there dwell in perpetual, and most exquisite Tortures. The condemn'd Wretches, we must believe, shall enjoy nothing pleasant there : Whatever they have to delight them in this World, they shall enjoy it no more for ever. And besides this, they shall be vexed with torment and pain, which shall universally possess and afflict them : No part of the Body shall be free from the smarting Punishment, and the whole Soul shall be filled with Misery. This will be the sad end of guilty Mirth and Pleasure ! This will be the final reward of that which is now gawdy, prosperous, and envied Wickedness. Thus we must believe concerning the Place of the future Punishments : It is in the nature and condition of it, such as to be a sad and terrible part of the Punishment.

Let us now, in the second Place, consider the Qualifications of the wretched society there : And this we shall see is such a company as will extreamly add to the Misery and Punishment of Hell. The Holy Scripture tells us, that Wicked Men shall be condemned, and thrown into the Place of Punishment prepared for the Devil and his Angels ; from whence we may learn,

learn, that they are to dwell with them. And so the Society of Hell is, that of Wicked Men and Devils. All the Angels that fell into Rebellion against their Maker, and all the Obstinate and Impenitent Wicked Men, that ever died such, in all Ages of the World, shall be confin'd together in Hell. A rueful Company this! Such as no Comfort, no Pleasure can be derived from it! No, they shall rather greatly encrease the unhappiness of one another. This we must needs conclude from these two common Qualifications of them: 1. That they are all of them extreamly Wicked and Malicious. 2. That they are all utterly miserable.

All the Company there are extreamly Wicked and Malicious, Hateful, and hating one another. All are Enemies to each other there, all is in a state of War: Perpetual Factions, and Combinations one against another, always banish Peace from thence; Eternal Discords, Furious Contentions, and Uncontrol'd Liberty to do Mischief reign there: And Love, and Order, and Government are things too good, too happy for Hell. The exquisite Pain and Torment which all endure, Transports them with Rage and Cruelty one against another. We may suppose them continually railing against, and reviling one another. May we not believe that the Devils insult over Damned Men, and tell them what hopes of Happiness they are fallen from, what offers of Favour and Mercy, and even of Heaven they have refus'd: How they fool'd away a precious space of

of Life on Earth in which they might have gain'd an Everlasting Happiness: How through an Excessive and Vain Care for their Bodies, they have lost their Immortal Souls. And may we not suppose the Damned Men revenging themselves as well as they can upon these Apostate Spirits: Telling them of the Glory and Bliss which they have thrown themselves from, the Wrath and Vengeance which they, too, have pull'd upon themselves: And cursing them for their false suggestions, for their Importunate Temptations, and for being greatly accessary to the Ruine and Damnation of Men.

And we may well believe, that wicked Men will be but a very vexatious and uneasie Company to one another there. Those Companions in Wickednes, who were the most pleasing to each other here, will be some of the most odious and ungrateful there. This seems to be suggested by our Saviour's Parable, concerning the rich Man thrown at his Death into Hell, (*Luke 16.*) whom he represents, as concern'd, that his Brethren might not come into that place of torment. Those who tempted and encourag'd one another to do wickedly, who harden'd each other into a contempt and defiance of all good Instruction and wholsom Reproof, will there hate and rage against one another, for these things, when they are all come to the sad end of their wickedness, which before they despised. Those that were known to each other here, if they are known there too, as 'tis likely they are, may, upon many accounts, be very uneasie and grievous to one

another. He, who by fair Pretences cover'd a false and hypocritical Heart, and made a shift to pass for a Saint among some on Earth, must be sadly abash'd to be found at last among the damned Crue in Hell, by them who knew his Godly Pretences here. Some few of the Company there will be such as have been Emperors and Kings on Earth, and renowned Captains and Commanders : Some of them have been vastly rich, and some dignified and noble : But all these will be huddled and confounded among the vulgar Fry of Mortals there : These will be levell'd with their Vassals, with those they have commanded or disdain'd, yea, and be subject to their contempt and reproaches. No Order, no respect of Persons is observ'd there ; none will pity and compassionate another in Hell ; this soft and kind Temper comes not there. Every one feels so much misery, as that no one is at leisure, neither is any one disposed for love and condolence. Those that made themselves uneasy to one another here, by their mutual Hatred, and frequent Provocations and Injuries, will continue Enemies, and continue to exercise all the Malice that they can against one another there.

These things are the natural Products and Effects of extream Wickedness, which is always malicious and prone to mischief. But from hence the wretched Company in Hell must needs be very vexatious to one another. What a torment may we easily imagine it must be, for implacable and furious Enemies to be confin'd together ! for them to be shut up in one close

close Prison, who are filled with Envy, Malice and Rage against one another ; who will only vex and torment one another. The straitness of their Prison, perhaps, will not allow, that any of them may retire from the rest, to lament his own Miseries alone, and be free from the Vexations of others.

Secondly, This Society will be very uneasie to one another upon this account also, That they all are perfectly miserable. Every one there, dwells amongst a company of miserable and complaining Creatures. Every one is surrounded with only such ; which way soever they look they can see none but spectacles of Horror. It must, sure, be easie for us to apprehend, that it is a terrible thing to dwell with those who are in continual Torment. We are commonly infected with the Sorrows of those whom we converse with ; and it makes us sad and Melancholy to sit among those that are so. Certainly, then, it will be a very dismal thing to be confin'd in this dark and gloomy House of Mourning ; amidst eternal Howlings, rueful complaints of tortur'd and despairing Creatures ! What a harsh and frightful sound will the mixture of their Shrieks, their Groans, and their Ravings make ! What a gasty Spectacle will it be to see one another surrounded with Flames, peirced through with Fire, and in all parts on a Flame ! To see the woful distorted looks by which each one is forced to betray the Torments that he feels ! Thus the Damned Creatures, like burning Coals, burn all the more, and all are the more miserable

rable for their being confin'd together in their Misery.

I have spoken of seeing and hearing and feeling in Hell, as what may agree even to the separate Souls of the Damned when they are without their Bodies: Because, as external Objects here were brought to the notice of the Mind in several ways, by the several senses, while the Soul liv'd in a Body, so the Objects in that sad place may be so order'd, as that they may immediately make such Impressions upon the Soul, without the bodily senses, as were convey'd by the senses, and thus make themselves sensible and perceived. And so it might be, that the separate Soul of the rich Man in the Parable might complain of the torment of Thirst, and wish for a cool drop of Water; that is, his Soul might have such an uneasie impression made upon it there, as would have been convey'd to it by a favourish Thirst of the Body, and might wish for an allay and refreshment to be communicated in the same way. And while Humane Souls from their frame and constitution do receive the Impressions or Notices of External Objects in those several ways and manners by which our senses convey them while we live in the Body; and other Spirits have perhaps some other way of receiving those Notices, and it may be but one way of perceiving all things, or the properties of things, this may be supposed as a main difference between Humane Souls and other created Spirits.

Thus we have seen the outward part of their
con-

condition who are thrown into Hell: What external Woes and Miseries shall afflict them. I come now to speak to the Third Head of that Punishment which I mention'd. Which I said lies in the unhappy State and Disposition of Mind which every Damned Wretch shall be under. Let us now take notice of his internal Miseries. And these, I think, we may justly believe, as they are more near, and intimate to him, so they are more sensible, and yet more tormenting, than all that has yet been mention'd. And there are these three things which make up the unhappy State of his Mind, and do exceedingly add to his Misery, and Punishment.

1. His Violent and Tyrannous Lusts and Passions. The wretched hardned Sinner was abandon'd to his own Vices and Passions, and he went out of the World possest and govern'd by these; therefore he must remain subject and enslav'd to them for ever. And Wicked Lusts and Passions are the disorders, the painful distempers of the Soul: They discompose its pleasing Harmony and disturb its easie Peace; they deform it, and fill it with Discords and Confusions. In the Nature of them, they deprive a Man of all Tranquillity and Peace, they make him even a Torment to himself, and he that is subject to them can have no enjoyment of himself. Hell, in a very sensible part of it, begins with Sin, and the Torments of it encrease upon a Man as his Soul is more, and more enslav'd to Wickedness. It is a Torment which attends every Lust and Passion, that

it fills the Wretched Soul with violent and unsatiable Desires: And there cannot well be a greater Torment, than Violent Desire; But this the Damned Creatures are Condemn'd to endure for ever: To desire a multitude of things, with the whole force of the Soul too, but to be crost, and disappointed of all that they desire. The Will remains and wishes for good, and pines, and languishes in the want of it; for it meets, alas, with nothing but evil. The Wretched Sinner had his Soul perhaps enslaved to sensual Pleasure: And when it goes out of the Body it retains still this for-did and mean propensity. For tho' we may observe that in some very mortifying distemperers of the Body, the Appetites to some sensual Pleasures, and the relish of them seem to be lost, yet in that case we shall find in the voluptuous Sinner, a discontent even for the loss of his Appetite to those Pleasures which he formerly doted on. This distemper seems to dwell still in the mind, and may live there even when it decays and dies in the Body, with the Decay and Death of that. The Sinner, then, may even in Hell desire and wish for his sensual delights which are all past and gone, and never shall be repeated any more. He may upon this account feel a torment like a Hunger never satisfied, or an unquenchable Thirst. And his Memory will afflict him, by calling to mind past Frolics and Pleasures which are now past for ever. Tho he remembers his guilty Frolics with remorse, and the causes of his present Misery, yet he cannot chuse but wish,

wish, as he did while he was in them, that they would have endured for ever. He thinks with regret and rage how soon they were all gone: And mourns when he considers that such transient, such short and fading delights, were all the Portion of good that he, an Immortal Being, shall ever enjoy. From frustrated and vain, yet violent desire, the Sinner must needs conceive an unspeakable sorrow, and this like a heavy load will oppress him: He feels pure unmixed sorrow, such as has not the least allay of comfort or Hope. This we may learn will be the sad case of Sinners in Hell, from our Saviours telling us often, *That there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.* They live in doleful anguish of mind, they can perceive, they can think of nothing but what gives them grief and sorrow. They mourn when they consider what they have been, and what they are: What they might have attain'd and enjoy'd, and what they must now endure for ever. And it is very likely, that the Sinners in Hell are transported with a vain rage against Almighty God, who deals so severely with them; For we may observe what rage, what defiance of Heaven will sometimes possess such Men here, when they meet with any considerable Affliction, or but a Contradiction to their unreasonable Will and Humour. And if he is possess with such anger and rage, there it will most exquisitely torment him, because it is vain and feeble. The Sinner in Hell cannot humbly submit to his griefs, nor take his Afflictions patiently, and so make

them the more easie and tolerable to himself: He has never been wont to submit his will to the will and disposal of God, and therefore, to be sure, cannot do this now. He will therefore be always in a vain contest with one that is too mighty for him; always strugling with Adamantine Chains of Fate, which for all his strugling hold him fast. He is tormented with Envy too, we may believe, against the happy Inhabitants of Heaven. And with Envy and Disdain, sees some honour'd whom he despised, some justified whom he condemned, some applauded whom he slandered and reproached: And some blest and happy whom he persecuted, yea blest for those very persecutions which they suffered from him, while he is condemn'd, and tormented for inflicting them. Thus a passionate, and vicious mind may be a severe torment to it self: And the Sinner in Hell will be a continual torment to himself, as he will continually desire to have what he shall never obtain, and wish he could avoid what he is eternally confin'd to. This leads me to mention,

2. Another torment of his mind which he shall endure in Hell, and that is a very bitter Despair. His own thoughts tell him there, that all the evils he meets with he must endure for ever: And he lies continually thinking on the Eternity of his Misery. Whatever grieves and vexes him, has this Additional sting from his own despairing mind, that it shall for ever so grieve and vex him. Are all his lov'd Pleasures and Joys gone? His own mind assures him

him they are gone for ever ! Does he see himself condemn'd to a dismal place ? Does he feel himself confin'd to a most vexatious Society ? Does he feel himself universally afflicted with unspeakable Torment ? All this his sad thoughts tell him he must endure for ever. As his condition is truly desperate, and remediless ; so he knows this. And despair, accordingly, has got a full possession of his Soul, and afflicts him with all its bitterness : He is not able to flatter, to deceive himself with hope : He cannot gain there so much allay, and ease, as even a false hope would afford : No, whatever he believes now concerning the duration of those Torments, he will then be assur'd that they shall last for ever : He will always remember the terrible sentence of the Judge , which has doom'd him to everlasting Fire. And by his thus continually thinking on the Eternity of his Misery, he Afflicts himself with what is to come, as well as with what he actually endures : And gathers as it were into every moment of his duration, the Terror and Torment of an Eternal Misery. As hope can alleviate the heaviest Griefs, and give some ease under the smartest Pains, so Despair will make the lightest evil heavy and intolerable : How much more, then, must it needs aggravate the severe Torments of Hell.

Lastly, There is another thing which will add yet much more to the Misery of Hell, and that is, the Self-condemnations and Rebukes of the Sinners own Conscience. This is what the Holy Scripture means by the *Worm that never dies,*

dies, which it tells us will be part of the Torment there. Tho the Condemn'd Sinner be angry with God, who, he thinks, deals unjustly, or too severely with him ; yet he is angry with himself too, for exposing himself to the terrible Wrath of God, and for provoking against himself, one that is too strong for him ; who has him now at his Mercy, and who, he is sure, will shew him no Mercy. He must blame himself for his Misery on these accounts, that he has pull'd it upon himself by chusing the course which has brought him to it, and that he might have avoided it if he would. If any one could lay his misery on the score of an eternal Decree, which had determined him to it before he was born : This would exasperate the proud Creature into a Blasphemous rage against God under so exquisite Torments. But it would also deliver him from the Rebukes of his own Conscience. His Misery then would be his Destiny and Fate, not his own mad and foolish choice. But this is not the case of any one. God determines none but Sinners to everlasting Misery, and never passes an irreversible Decree of Punishment on them till they die impenitent. So that this will be the Condemnation which every Sinner will be liable to, that he has ruin'd and destroy'd himself : And when he is in Hell, he will be ever tormented with such stinging thoughts as these. Whatever I endure here I must blame none but my self for it ! I have brought my self to all this Misery. I was obstinately set upon the course which brought me hither, And when I had sinn'd.

finn'd and deserv'd these things, there was Favour and Mercy offer'd me, upon the condition of leaving my Sins, but I refus'd it. I have sold my Soul for nought! I have lost my self in the pursuit of very Trifles! Oh how vain, how worthless are all those Pleasures, those Profits, and those Honours, for which I incurr'd my Damnation! If all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them had been offer'd me, and I could have enjoy'd them all for as many Millions of years, as there are Sands on the Sea shore; yet I had been a Fool, if all this would have courted me to make my self everlastinglly miserable! O how much more am I such, who for a few moments transient Enjoyments of a very small portion of the World, that is past with me, have sold my self to everlasting Destruction!

Thus will the Condemned Sinner's own mind lash and torment himself. And a very grievous torment it is for a Man to be angry and quarrel with himself. It is especially, a very sad case with the Sinner in Hell, who has God his very terrible Enemy; Is confin'd amongst Devils and Wicked Men, his Cruel Enemies; and he is at the same time an Enemy to himself too. No one else will pity him, nor can he pity himself; and whatever Woes and Torments he endures, he redoubles, and improves them all with this spiteful thought, all this have I brought upon my self. And in Hell these lashes and rebukes will give him no intermission, because they will continually be provok'd and edg'd with the Miseries, which he shall there continually endure. Thus

Thus I have briefly represented the future Punishments of Sinners: And I doubt not but it has been done very imperfectly: I believe they are such as we cannot now conceive what they will be. But if I have said too much of them, and if they are not so terrible as they are represented, it would be safest to err on this hand, since the effect of this would be but to render us the more careful to avoid them. And without doubt it is better, that we should fear the worst that can be said, than that we feel the least that can be true. Let us seriously consider what has been said, that it may beget in us such a fear of God, as to make us depart from all Iniquity. *Which God of his infinite Mercy Grant through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

T H E
P R A Y E R.

GREAT and Glorious God! Thou art the Supreme, and Rightful Judge and Governor of the World. Thou rulest it with Wisdom, and thou Judgest it with Equity: Thou lovest Righteousness, and hatest Iniquity. We must needs acknowledg, O Lord, that our Sins do deserve to be exceeding vile and odious in thy sight. Oh what Enormity can we see in them! and much more of it must be Obvious and Offensive to the pure Eyes of thy Glory, When we seriously consider

consider them, what Unrighteousness and Injustice appears in them towards a Just and Righteous God ! What falsehood and treachery is there in them against the God of Truth ! What affront, and contempt of the Majesty of Heaven, whom the highest Orders of Glorious Angels Reverence and Adore ! Oh what Ingratitude is there in them against the most free, and the most abundant Goodness ! And how exceedingly are our Sins aggravated by their mighty number, by our frequent repetitions of them ! By the very small and contemptible Inducements, which have drawn us to commit them ! O Lord, we are even confounded to think how easily we have been drawn into our Rebellion against thee ! How we have exercised and despised thy Patience and Forbearance of us, and have encourag'd our selves to do wickedly still, by that which should have led us to Repentance. O Lord, we must own thou art altogether just in designing the most terrible Punishments for such guilty Creatures. And we shall deserve to endure worse things than we can now conceive or imagine, if we will persevere in our Wickedness to the end. O Lord, of thy infinite Mercy spare us : Let thy mighty Grace prevent our Ruine. Pardon our past Sins, and turn us from the way that leads to Perdition: From all Evil and Mischief, from Sin, from the Crafts and Assaults of the Devil, from thy Wrath, and from Everlasting Damnation, good Lord deliver us. Blessed be thy Name, thou hast been so kind and gracious, as to reveal and discover to us the terrible Punishments design'd for Sinners, that we might avoid them. O Lord, we pray thee, possess us with a due and wholsom fear of thee, and of thy Judgments: Make us, as we ought, to fear above all things, thy Wrath, that so we may take care to avoid it, and may depart from all Iniquity. Let the sad event, and end of Wickedness be much in our thoughts ; that it may help us to mortifie our most beloved Sins. Let us always remember, that the wages of Sin is eternal Death, tho the Pleasure and Profits of it, are all but for a very short season. Let us not

so greedily pursue, nor so excessively enjoy the things of this World, as to provoke thee to put us off with these. Let us not follow a multitude to do evil, nor chuse the broad road which leads down to Perdition: But direct us to find the narrow way, and assist us to enter in at the strait Gate, which leads to Life Everlasting. Direct us O Lord, in the wise, the safe, and happy way of thy Commandments. Write thou thy Law in our Hearts, that we may never depart from it: And do thou graciously pardon all our unwilling failings and defects, and accept our sincere but poor services, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ.

We humbly pray to thee, O Lord, for all Mankind, that they may all be brought from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God. We pray thee look in Mercy upon thy Church, cleanse, and defend it from all Evil, and grant that every Member of it may so discharge the duties of his place and station, as may be for the Honour of our Religion, for the Peace and Welfare of the whole Body of Christ, and to thy Glory. We earnestly beg thy favour to the Land of our Nativity: Oh pardon our crying Sins, turn us from every evil way, make us to love and practice the True Religion, and be thou, we pray thee, our defence against all the Enemies of thy True Religion establish'd amongst us. Blest, and direct, and assist thy Servant, and our Sovereign Lord the King; make him a glorious Instrument of thy Churches Prosperity and Peace, and give Him Prosperity and Peace with it. Do good abundantly to the Royal Family, endue them plenteously with Heavenly Gifts, prosper them with all Happiness, and let us be always blest in them. We pray for all that are related to us; Oh let them live in thy sight, let their ways be directed to keep thy Statutes, and bring them at last to thy Heavenly Kingdom. We give thee thanks for all thy Mercy and Goodness towards us, particularly for the Means of Grace which we have this day enjoy'd; O let them become by thy Blessing, the Efficual means of

of our Salvation. We humbly commit our selves to thy Gracious keeping this Night, we pray thee let no evil come near us. Let our Nights be spent in tranquility and safety, and our days in thy excellent service, and do thou accept us in Jesus Christ our Mediator and Advocate, with whose most comprehensive Words, we conclude our poor Addresses, saying,

OUR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil: For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

T H E

THE
ETERNITY
 OF THE
Future Punishments
ILLUSTRATED and PROV'D.

Let us Pray.

*P*Revent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Matth. 25. 46. former part.
And these shall go away into Everlasting Punishment.

IT has pleas'd the Great Governour of the World, very justly, to require our Homage and Obedience, as the Condition of enjoying his Favour, and our Happiness thereby. And to enforce that Obedience, that we might enjoy his Favour and be blest in it, he has represented

fented to us the Terrors of his Anger, and declar'd how severely he has determin'd to punish Obstinate, and Impenitent Sinners. This he has so fully reveal'd and declar'd, as is sufficient, if we consider what he has said, to give us as full and compleat a conception of the Future Punishments as we can possibly attain without feeling them.

This method of the Divine Wisdom and Goodness is very fit to have a mighty force and power upon us. It is reasonable we should fear what he threatens, and that it should restrain or divert us from those things which it is threatned against. But so foolish we are and easie to be deluded, that the adversary of our Souls finds out ways to hinder this. He who endeavours to bring us under the sad evils that are threatned, is able in many Men to stifle or weaken the Fear of them. This he does for the most part, by keeping Men from a sober consideration of these things. He fills their Minds with other thoughts, and Industriously keeps them entertain'd with the Cares and Pleasures of this World. And he easily obtains the diverting of their Minds from the thoughts of such things as these : Because, as the sins of Men are very agreeable to their corrupt Inclinations they are of themselves loth to consider or believe how displeasing they are to Almighty God, and how mischievous they are likely to prove themselves. But if he cannot always prevent a Man from looking forward, and bethinking himself, at least in some starts of thought, what is likely to be the

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Event and Consequence of his Course of Living: Then, that yet he may not be much alarm'd, this Enemy endeavours to soften the future Punishments, and represent them with as little terror as he can. He helps the bold wit of Man to find out plausible pretences to believe, that God does not mean to fulfil the utmost severity of his Threatnings in this matter: and by wit so employ'd, he truly helps a Man certainly to befool himself, and perhaps some others.

This Discourse is intended, if it may please God, to frustrate both these Arts of the Adversary upon some. By calling to mind, and reviving the thoughts and consideration of the future Punishments in as many as it shall be communicated to; and by representing to them these Punishments in their true weight and terror, so far as we may learn this from the Holy Scripture. It has therefore been said, that the words of our Text do afford us Two Heads of Meditation on this Subject. The First, Concerning the Nature and Kind of the Punishment which is prepar'd and design'd for Wicked Men in the other World. The Second, concerning the duration of that Punishment; for the Text says, they shall go away from the Judgment of the Great Day into Punishment, and that Punishment shall be Everlasting. The former of these I have already insisted on and finish'd. And I thought fit to repreint the Future Punishment under these Three Heads.

i. It consists partly in the Nature of the Place:

Place: Which I said the Holy Scripture speaks of, as fallen with a gloomy Darkness, and as fill'd with Fire. It is certainly destitute of all things comfortable and pleasant, and also furnish'd with that which is exceedingly tormenting and grievous.

2. It consists in the Qualifications of the Society which are met with there. These will be the Apostate Angels and Sinful Men: All very uneasy and vexatious to one another, by their extream Wickedness and Malice, and by their common Misery.

3. It consists also partly in the Wretched State and Disposition of the Sinners own mind there. Who will be vehemently tormented with the violence of his own Passions and Lusts, with his most bitter and perfect despair, and with the eternal rebukes of his own Conscience, the gnawings of the never dying Worm.

I shall make no more repetition of what was then said; But proceed to the second part of the Discourse: To say what is necessary concerning the duration of this terrible Punishment, which, if it be rightly stated, it will add very much to the terror of the Punishment. And on this Head I purpose to Illustrate a little the import and meaning of this Expression, that we may have the larger, and more effectual apprehensions concerning it: And to prove also the Truth of what shall be represented as the import and meaning of it.

We may, then, observe that these Three things following may be reckon'd included in

this, that it is said to be Everlasting. 1. That there will be no interval or intermission of the Torments of Hell. 2. That they will never abate or decay. 3. That they will never come to an end. These Three things I shall a little insist upon, but chiefly on the last of them.

1. The future Miseries design'd for the Punishment of Sinners, will know no intervals or intermissions. As they are to be Everlasting, they will be continual. They will give the Condemn'd Wretches no respite from vexation and torment, no moments of ease or repose. No beam of cheerful Light can ever pierce into that dark World: And the sad Night there is without any rest or sleep. The Fire will continually torment, and the Worm of Conscience continually gnaw; they will constantly despair all of them, and be constantly vexatious and uneasie to one another. Never will the Ears be free from the loud sounds of doleful complaints: Never will the Eyes cease to be afflicted with ghastly and horrid spectacles. In this Life those that are most unhappy, yet have some intervals of Good to allay the evils they meet with; and there is a mixture of some good in our Condition however evil it is: But there is nothing in Hell but pure unmixed and continual Misery: So the wretches there can at no time entertain themselves with any thing that can divert or deceive their Woes and Sorrows. This the Holy Scripture very plainly teaches us. St. John speaking of those who shall be thrown into that dismal place of Punishment, says, (*Rev. 14. 10, 11.*) *They shall drink*

drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, and shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone: *And they shall have no rest day nor night.* He means their Torment shall be incessant: And as day and night do perfectly measure the time of this World, and without any interval succeed each other, so their Torments shall without any intermission or respite, measure out their long abode in this place of Punishment. Our Blessed Saviour also may be understood to suggest the same thing in his Parable of the Luxurious and Unmerciful Rich Man, who was thrown into Hell. Whom he represents as in great Torment, and begging for a little refreshment but could obtain none. No, he could not obtain so short and small a Refreshment, as that of one poor drop of Water, to cool his Tongue for a Moment: as we see, *Luke 16. 24.* There will not be any intermissions of Torment, then, as the foolish *Jews* imagine: Who have a fancy among them, that when they begin their Sabbath on Earth, there is a signal given in Hell, and the wretched Creatures there are released from their Tortures; but when their Sabbath is ended they must return to them again. This is a very vain imagination, and has no Ground or Foundation in Holy Scripture, nor does need a Confutation.

2 We must understand from the Word Everlasting in the Text, that the Torments of Hell will continue without any abatement or decay. As that Fire will never go out, we are to believe it will never languish or decay.

It is made of a more lasting Nature, than that which we are acquainted with. This is a Temporary World, and all things here are subject to alterations: But that is an eternal one, and all things in it are steady and unchangeable. The Wrath of God towards the Condemned Wretches will not abate; there will be nothing to diminish that: Which is that Breath of the Lord, as the Prophet speaks, that kindles the infernal Flames. The behaviour of the abandon'd Sinners under their Misery, is more likely to inflame and increase, than abate it. The Almighty can never be weary of Punishing. The Divine Wrath, then, will keep up the everlasting Fire continually in all its Vigour and Fury: And as long as their Misery endures their own self-tormenting thoughts will continue to afflict them too. And the Sinners fence of their Miseries will not grow less by their continuance; they will not in Hell acquire any such Virtue, as Patience to fortifie, and compose their minds under their Afflictions. Nor will they ever gain the least glimpse of hope to allay their sorrows. They never have the less to endure for any thing which they have already endured, and therefore they have not the thoughts of that to comfort them. Since their Punishment is Everlasting, it will never be near to an end, therefore will never either the hopes, or the approach of that abate their sorrows. Tho the weary Travellor is most tired at his Journeys end, yet he is comforted and forgets his weariness, when he is come within a short prospect of his home. But it is not so with the

the Damned, they have never any prospect of an end of their Miseries to abate their fence of them. They expect nothing but their continuance, and that they will continue in all their extremity, as well as in their duration. We may observe our Saviour represents the Wicked Rich Man in Hell as denied the least refreshment, and even the most transient one that could be imagin'd. As the Damned shall never be favour'd with one Moments absolute and perfect Rest, so they shall neither have any degrees of rest, or any refreshment to abate or relax their unspeakable Torments.

3. The last thing mentioned as included in the Word Everlasting is, That the Torment and Misery of the Damned in Hell shall never come to an end. On this I shall somewhat longer insist, to Illustrate and Prove it.

And how considerable ! How terrible is this ! The Torment and Miseries of the Damned shall never come to an end ! We should often and deliberatly consider so weighty a thing, that it might have its due and suitable impression upon us. It is what nearly concerns us all ; for this is what we have deserv'd by our Sins ; and what we are in great danger of falling into, as we are surrouned with temptations to Sin. That which will never end when it is once begun, and which will quickly begin with us, if it be not prevented by a speedy Repentance deserves to be very soberly thought upon. Let us, then, fix our thoughts a while upon this matter at present, the rather if any of us have never yet seriously consider'd this

important matter. Let us consider a little the vastness of an endless Duration. Oh unmeasurable ! Oh amazing Eternity ! While we strive to fathom it with our thoughts it is still vastly deeper than they can reach : While we strive to express it in words all, the words that we can say beside can never exhaust the full meaning of this one Word Eternity. No space of time, not even the longest that we can imagine is able to measure this duration. If we should compute, and reckon up how many grains of Sand there are in the whole Earth, and should put together so many Millions of Years, all that mighty Number would not be able near to reach Eternity. If we should suppose the whole space between the Earth, and the highest Skies, consisting of many Thousand Miles in Diameter, all fill'd with grains of the smallest Sand : And an Angel were appointed to take from this heap one grain of Sand in an Hundred Thousand Years, it would be a very long space of time, we must think before that whole heap would be removed : Yet would not this long space of time be able near to reach the duration of the Sinners Torments in Hell. Yea, if we suppose that whole space of time, how great soever it is to be repeated, and multiplied as often as there would be single grains in that large heap : Yet would not all this be able to measure out the duration of the Sinners Torments in Hell. Neither can we suppose all this to be the one half of Eternity ; no nor a quarter, nor an Hundredth part of it ! All this would bear no proportion to it ! When

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the wretched Sinners have lien thus long in Misery, they have still as long to lie there as ever they had, as even at the first moment of their falling into it. Eternity does not wast at all as time does : There is not the les duration to come for all that is past, because the duration will never be at an end. The Sinners are not at all nearer an end of their Punishment after all this, nor will ever be nearer an end of it, than they were when they first fell into it ! They will always have an Eternity of Torments to expect and endure ! And this is the very Hell of Hell, this is that which is most terrible in it ! Oh how should this at present amaze, and affect us !

But this is that which Men are most loth to believe of the Future Punishments : And tho it be most evidently and exprefly taught us in Holy Scripture yet they find out Cavils against it : As indeed it is easie for the wit of Men to do, so as to baffle and confound it self, even in the most evident, and clearest matters. I shall therefore endeavour the confirmation of this Truth, that the future Punishment of Sinners shall never come to an end. This, for method sake, I shall attempt under these Three Heads of Discourse. 1. I shall make it appear, that the Persons of the Damned shall endure for ever. 2. That their Punishment shall also continue for ever. 3. I shall answer some of the chief Objections against this Truth.

I begin with the first of these ; To prove that the Persons of the Damned shall endure for ever. This I do because some would per-
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swade themselves and others, that the condemned Wretches shall be consum'd in the Fire of Hell, and be turn'd into nothing. Against which vain imagination these things may be urg'd.

It is evident that Mankind were in their Original Constitution designed to endure for ever ; we were made with immortal Souls for this purpose : And this is the Excellency and Dignity of our Natures. It is therefore hard to imagine, that God should ever turn to nothing again any such Creatures, and certainly is not to be believ'd, unless he has expressly said it, as we shall find he has not. It is not suitable to the Wisdom and Power of God to alter and change his designs and purposes.

Further ; According to this design of our endless Duration, the Holy Scripture plainly tells us, there shall be a Resurrection both of the Just, and of the Unjust. The Bodies of Wicked Men shall be raised again, and reunited to their Immortal Souls. And it is the common condition of the Resurrection, that what before was Corruptible shall then become Incorruplicable, and the Mortal Bodies of Men, shall become Immortal. All shall rise again with spiritual Bodies, and in that respect be as the Angels in Heaven, as our Saviour intimates in his discourse on this Subject with the *Sadducees*. But what can we imagine this is for, but that they shall endure for ever ? Can we think that the Bodies of Wicked Men are rais'd Immortal, only to appear before the Tribunal, where

where they shall be Judg'd, and then immediately, or after a little while, to be consum'd in the Flames of Hell?

But farther, The place of Punishment, and the Instruments of their Torment, are every where in Scripture said to be such as endure for ever. The Fire is everlasting Fire: The Blackness of Darkness that shall endure for ever: And the Worm dieth not. But can we imagine that, he who prepar'd not Hell but for sinful Creatures should continue that when they are consum'd and are no more? Is it to be imagin'd, that an everlasting Fire is prepared to consume, and not rather to torment for ever without consuming? And let us observe what is meant by the Worm which dieth not: This must be allow'd to signify the Sharp rebukes and upbraiding of the Sinners own Conscience, blaming himself for his own destruction. But can this Worm live when the Sinner dies? Or has he any Conscience to torment him, or can he be sensible of any such Torment as self-rebuke who ceases to be?

But they who would be of this Opinion pretend to defend it from Scripture; and they urge, that the Scripture speaks of the Damned as destroy'd, and perishing, and as falling under a second Death. To which it must be said, if we would rightly understand the Holy Scripture, we must let it interpret it self. And that affords these just prejudices against their Interpretation of those expressions.

The Scripture speaks of the Punishment of Sinners as everlasting Punishment, particularly

ly in our Text; But everlasting Punishment must be founded in everlasting being; for that which is not, cannot any longer be said to be punish'd. And it is said of Ungodly Men, (*2 Thess. 1. 8, 9.*) *They Shall be punished with everlasting Destruction.* This were a very improper way of speaking, if it means only, that they shall be everlasting destroyed; for such cannot be said to be punish'd with everlasting Destruction. And it is well enough known, that in all Languages it is very usual to say of some, that they are utterly undone, and perish when they continue still to be, but are fallen into a desperate state of Misery, from whence they have no hopes to recover. It is observable to our purpose also, that the Holy Scripture uses the Word Life alone for happy Being very frequently, as in *Mat. 19. 17.* where our Saviours says to one. *If thou wilt enter into Life keep the Commandments?* and again, in the latter clause of this verse in connexion, with our Text. Which certainly leads us to understand the Word Death in Holy Scripture of miserable Being.

As for the Second Death which Sinners shall fall under it is apparent, that this is spoken of as a Punishment. Therefore of good Men, it is said, *They shall not be hurt by the second death,* *Rev. 2. 11.* And *the second death shall have no power over such,* 'tis said, *Rev. 20. 6.* But if this be a Punishment, it cannot mean, that those who are thrown into the Everlasting Fire, are consum'd by it and turn'd to nothing; For by this Death they would be released

leaved from their Torments. Is it not very evident, that Punishment must rather lie in the enduring of Torment, than in being released from it? Do not these Men fall into this imagination, that Sinners shall be consum'd and cease to be, as thinking it too severe, that they should be endlessly tormented? And yet will they say, 'tis a Punishment to be consum'd in the Fire of Hell, and to be deliver'd from that Torment? But the Scripture it self plainly interprets this Phrase, the second Death, of endless Torment and Misery. In *Rev. 20. 10.* the Apostle says, of those who should be cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, *That they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.* And in the 14th Verse of that Chapter, he says of that Lake of Fire, *This is the second death.* Again of several sorts of Sinners, he says, in *Rev. 21. 8.* *They shall have Their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second death,* wherein he plainly calls their Torment and Misery, the second Death.

So much I think may suffice to prove the first Assertion, That the Persons of the Damned shall endure for ever. The second thing to be prov'd is this, that their Punishment also shall endure for ever: Or they shall always be confin'd to a State, and Place of Torment and Misery. For some would fain believe, that the damned after the enduring a great deal of Misery in Hell, shall be released from their tortures, and translated to Happiness: Which vain Opinion has no Foundation in Scrip-

Scripture, but we shall meet with much there against it. Let these things following be consider'd.

We may observe, That the word which the Holy Scripture makes use of to express the duration of these miseries by, is also often used there, to express the duration of God himself. Thus the Ancient Greek Translation, which our Saviour, and his Apostles refer to, applies the very word which is used in our Text, particularly, in *Isa. 40. 28.* where 'tis said of God *He is the everlasting God.* By which it appears, that the Holy Scripture does sometimes mean by this word a duration which is without end; and a Learned Critick says, there is not one place in the New Testament, where the word in the Text must be understood of a less duration. (*Hammonds Tract. Hell Torments.*)

Again, It is to our purpose to observe, That the same word is made use of in the other part of the Verse, where our Text is, to express the Duration of the Future Happiness which shall reward good Men. If that must be understood to be Eternal, then, we have good reason to believe this will be so too. Our Saviour speaks of both exactly in the same manner, and does not give the least intimation of any difference in the duration of them.

Further, The Word which we render Everlasting does, where it is used to signify a less than endless duration, yet signify, that the thing spoken of, shall endure as long as the subject of it does endure. For instance, when the Prophet *Elisha* threatned *Gehazi* (*2 Kings 5. 27.*)

5. 27.) That the Leprosie of Naaman should cleave to him, and his Posterity for ever. It means, That he should be infected with that Leprosie as long as he should live, and his Race or Posterity as long as they should endure. So that the word according to the lowest signification which ever belongs to it, must mean in our Text, at least, that the damned Persons shall be tormented, and suffer as long as they continue to be. If then I have prov'd that they shall be for ever; it follows, that they shall be tormented for ever, since our Text says, their Punishment shall be Everlasting.

Further, Our Saviour forces us to believe thus of the Future Punishment of Sinners, in that large and significant expression concerning it, which we have, in *Rev. 20. 10.* where he says of some wicked Men, that *They shall be tormented for ever and ever*: Which is an Expression often used in this Book, to signify the Eternity of God, and several times to signify the Duration of the Future Torments of Sinners, and is no where used in any expression where it may be understood to mean less than an endless Duration. In that Expression then, our Saviour plainly means, that the Condemned Sinners shall suffer endless Affliction and Torment by the everlasting Fire of Hell. And this is also evidently taught us, in *Rev. 14. 11.* Where 'tis said of them, *The smoak of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever.* But it cannot be, that the smoak of their Torment should ascend for ever and ever, and yet their Torment should not so endure. And when the Scripture says of them,

them, *Their Worm dieth not, and their Fire shall not be quenched, as Isa. 66. 24.* And three times in the Ninth Chapter of *Mark*, We must needs understand it, as meaning, that the Condemned Wretches shall always feel the rebukes of their own Consciences, and the pains of Hell. And thus I think is this matter also sufficiently prov'd: For it cannot well be imagin'd, how the Eternity of the future Torments, could be exprest in more full, plain, and significant terms than the Scripture uses, in those places which have been produced: So that the Adversaries of this Opinion cannot devise any expressions which the Scripture should have used to teach us this, if it were intended we should believe it, and which it has not used, or else has used others with as much significance as they.

I proceed now in the last place to endeavour the confirmation of this, by answering the chief Objections which are urg'd against it: And there are some who urge, that to punish Wicked Men with Everlasting Misery and Torment, does not well agree with the Justice, or with the goodness of God. Against which Objections we have these things following to say, which I suppose will fully answer them: But at least they will deserve, that no Man should suffer himself to be influenced by them, or presume that they are true.

And in the first place it is worthy to be consider'd, That a thing may well enough accord with the Divine Attributes, which we cannot well apprehend to do so. As we cannot by

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searching find out God, we cannot find out the Almighty to Perfection; so 'tis hard for us to determine what does well agree with the Divine Attributes, and what does not. Certainly we must always reckon upon this, that he knows better what it becomes him to do than we can know it.

Again, Whatever God does resolve and determine to do is certainly well enough agreeing with the Excellencies and Perfections of his Nature: For he will do nothing that is not so. And what he has very manifestly declared, he will do, we may reasonably believe does agree to him: And then, since there is so much ground in Scripture to believe, that God has determin'd and declar'd this thing. It is a very bold and unreasonable presumption to think it does not suit well with any of his Attributes to do it.

Further, Whereas some pretend, it is unsuitable to the exact Justice of God to punish the short, and transient Sins of Men in this Mortal Life, with Endless Torments in another: It may serve to answer this, that no Government in the World ever thought it a Rule to be observed in Punishing, as required by Equity and Justice, that the Pain and Penalty inflicted should last no longer, than that space of time which the Crime took up in the Commission of it. Therefore have some been put to Death from whence they can never be restor'd, and some have been Banish'd or Imprisoned for a long time in Punishment of Crimes, which were committed in a very small space of

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time. And there is good reason for this; because there are other things to be consider'd in the Crimes which are punish'd besides that: Other Circumstances may greatly heighten and aggravate the evil of them. And since Justice does require, that the Punishment be proportionate to the Nature of the Crime; it does by consequence require, that this circumstance alone should not be the Rule of Punishing. But if Men would seriously consider the vile and heinous Nature of Sin, which it derives from the excellency of the Person against whom it is committed; from the meanness of us who oppose, and affront him in all our Wickedness; from the many Obligations which we lie under to love and obey him; and from the slight and trivial inducements which draw us into Sin: I say if these things were well considered, we could not chuse but think, that an eternal Punishment might be justly enough inflicted for so vile and enormous a thing. And it is because Men have a very slight opinion of the Nature of Sin, that they fancy the Punishment of it, may be less severe, than the Divine Threatnings do import.

We may consider again; That it is very just with God, who is an Eternal Being, to retain an eternal Hatred and Displeasure against him, who has justly provoked and deserv'd his displeasure. And this is acknowledg'd by those who suppose, that the future Punishment of Sinners does soon consume them, and turn them into nothing. Again, It must be allow'd to be just, that God should give a Creature such

such a duration of being, as he has made it capable of, or design'd it for. Since then he has given Man a being capable of Eternal duration, and seems to have design'd him for it, in the first forming of him, he may justly continue his Being for ever. And then since he may justly be eternally displeased with this everlasting Creature he may justly exercise his displeasure, and punish him.

The Objection from the infinite Goodness of God, is very weak and frivolous upon these accounts.

We must not say, That God exercises his Goodness necessarily: He is a free Agent tho he is good: And from thence can, as he pleases, exercise his goodness differently, and make some in a greater, some in a less degree partakers of it. And he can chuse the Objects of Goodness; so as to exercise it towards some while he does no more exercise it towards others. And this Objection is of no force at all, unless we could suppose, that God as he is good, must needs exercise his Goodness for ever towards all that are capable to partake of his Goodness. This is not to be said, and therefore it may be, that some Men may lie under eternal Miseries notwithstanding the Goodness of God.

Further, Such Beings as are naturally capable to partake of the Divine Goodness, may be legally incapable of it: They may be condemn'd and put into such a State, as the great Governour of the World has determined shall not partake of his Goodness. According to

the settled and fixed Order of Government they may fall into such a condition. And this is the case of condemn'd Sinners in another Life. It is determin'd very justly that the Favours of the other Life shall be secur'd in this, or be lost for ever: And that they shall be offer'd in this, but not in the other. Hence 'tis said in Scripture of the time of this Life, *Now is the accepted time, this is the day of Salvation.* **2 Cor. 6. 2.** But if it be consistent with the Divine Goodness to prescribe such Rules to it self, and such Rules are fixed and settled, then he who refuses or neglects to secure the Everlasting Favours of God, during all that time in which they are offer'd, and may be secur'd, he must notwithstanding the Divine Goodness, after that eternally want them. And he is become legally, and Judicially uncapable to receive them.

Again; 'Tis true, Punishment is not an Exercise of Goodness: But when it comes from God, it is always an exercise of Justice. And God may, as being both good and just, chuse which of these Attributes, he will exercise towards any Beings which are capable of being the Objects of those Exercises. He may *have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will,* if it be just, *he may harden, and punish, and with-hold his Mercy from them.* And it were absurd to imagine, that God, who is infinitely just as well as good, must be partial to either of these Attributes, and exercise without any limits his Goodness, so as to deny himself the opportunity to Exercise or Glori-
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sic his Justice. He may as well be supposed in some instances, to let his Goodness give way to his Justice in the Eternal Punishment of some Sinners, as to let his Justice give way to his Goodness in saving others, and making them eternally happy. The former of these is as suitable, as agreeing to the Divine Nature and Attributes as the latter: Everlasting Punishment of some Sinners is as agreeing to him, as the Everlasting Happiness of others. He Exercises and Glorifies his Goodness on some while they dwell in Life Everlasting; and the everlasting Punishment of others for their sins greatly magnifies that Goodness, and adds a mighty lustre to it; as it makes it appear from how great misery the happy Saints are deliver'd, which they were liable to, and had deserv'd: It makes the Exercise of his Goodness to others the more Glorious; tho it be not an Exercise of Goodness to them.

And thus I think the main Objections against this Truth are sufficiently answer'd; and it is sufficiently confirm'd, that the Punishment of condemn'd Sinners in Hell shall be without End.

It remains now, That we do very seriously consider this matter. Oh what an important thing is it that both the Rewards, and Punishment of our Life on Earth shall be without end! What solicitude and concern should we be possest with to know what we must do to be saved: In what course we may avoid these everlasting Miseries! And what care should this make us take of our Life, and Actions! That

we might always do well, and abstain from doing Evil ; take the way that leads to Life, and avoid the Paths of Perdition ! How should it quicken us to a speedy Repentance of our evil ways, and the forsaking of them ! To consider, how much Misery it is which, till we repent, we are obnoxious to : To consider that there is nothing but the uncertain remainder of a Frail Life between us and endless Misery ! That we know not but the next moment may be our last ; and if it should be so, and we should die impenitent, we were irrecoverably undone ! We should consider, we are by our Transgressions become obnoxious and liable to these eternal Punishments : But by the favourable Patience of God we have yet time allow'd us to avoid them if we will. As yet is Life propos'd to us ; we have Life and Death set before us, and are at liberty to chuse : We are told, that Wicked Men shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Everlasting, on purpose that we might fear the fate of the former and avoid it, and desire the Happiness of the latter, and seek, and obtain it. And as we have it herein evidently shown us what is our main Interest and Concern, so we must reckon, that we shall perish with great and sore Aggravation if we neglect it. Which God of his infinite Mercy forbid for the sake of Jesus Christ.

THE PRAYER.

O Eternal, Infinite, and Incomprehensible Lord our God ! Thou art most Glorious and Excellent in thy Nature, and in all thy Works : In all things like thy self, and there is none besides thee like unto thee. Wonderful, O Lord, and glorious are the exercises of thy Favour and Goodness ; and most terrible, yet Just and Righteous are thy Judgments. Thy favour is Eternal Life, and Unspeakable Happiness : And thy Wrath is Eternal Death and Unspeakable Misery. O Lord, when we consider the terrors of thy Wrath, we are afraid : We cannot chuse but be troubled and ashamed to think how extravagantly careless we have been of offending thee ! How little heed we have taken to our ways ! And especially how frequently ; how easily we have been drawn into known Sin, and how slight inducements have been able to make us provoke thy just Wrath and Indignation against our selves. O Lord, we abhor, we condemn our selves for this our folly and madness. We admire, we praise, and thank thee for that glorious patience and long-suffering of thine, which has hitherto spar'd us. It is of the Lord's Mercy, that we are not consumed, and because thy compassions fail not. It is because thou art slow to Anger, and of great Mercy, and thou waitest to be gracious. We give thee thanks for that we have yet time allow'd us to consider our ways, and be wise to our advantage : To reflect upon our doings, and repent of, and forsake the evil of them. O Lord, we beseech thee add to thy Mercy towards us the gift of an unsign'd Repentance,

that we may be qualified to receive the Remission of our Sins. Give us such a lively, and sound Faith in Jesus Christ, as that we may share in the propitiation which he made for Sin, by the shedding of his Blood for us. And when we repent and return unto thee, as thou hast spared, do thou pardon us. O let it please thee to receive us graciously : For thou hast said thou delightest not in the Death of a Sinner, but had rather that he should turn to thee and Live. O Lord write thy Law in our hearts, that we may never depart from it. Make us to fear thee and to depart from all iniquity : To take heed to our ways, and walk circumspectly, and to avoid, as we can, the Occasions and Temptations to Sin. Grant us grace to subdue and mortifie all the Corrupt Inclinations of our Nature, to resist the Temptations we shall meet with from the World, or the Devil : To oppose all our Spiritual Enemies with such success, that being final Conquerors of them, the second Death may never have power over us.

We pray to thee O Father of Mercies for the Welfare, and Happiness of all Mankind : And especially, that they may know thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, whom to know is Life Eternal. We pray for the good estate of the Catholick Church. O let a plentiful effusion of thy Holy Spirit upon it, fill it with Divine Light and Knowledge, and bring into the way of Truth, all such as have erred, and are deceived. Promote in it all true and acceptable Piety, every glorious Virtue, together with Union and Peace. We beseech thee to be merciful to the Land of our Nativity. O Lord continue the Light of thy Gospel among us, and make us to abound in all good works, diligently performing our several duties towards thee and towards one another : And give us the Blessings of Health, and Plenty, and Peace. We pray thee, abundantly bless our gracious King : Give him long Life, Health, and Happiness, and a long and prosperous Reign among us. Make the Royal Family always

a Blessing to us in affording us such as are Wise, and Pious, and Good to Rule over us. Bless all our Relations and Friends with all Spiritual Blessings: And grant that whatever their outward Circumstances are, all may work together for their good, and may promote their Salvation. We give thee thanks for the Mercies of this day especially for the means of Grace: O grant that we may use them always so as may be to our Salvation, not our sorer Destruction. Keep us we pray thee in peace and safety this Night; make us to acknowledge thee in all our ways, and do thou direct our steps. All we humbly ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord and only Mediator: In whose words we conclude our Prayers, saying,

O U R Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil: For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

T H E

T H E
Separate State
 O F
GOOD SOULS,
 Represented and Improv'd.

Let us Pray.

PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Rev. 14. 13.

And I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their works do follow them.

IT is a very grievous, and afflicting train of Thoughts, which our present wretched Mortality exposes us to: And it damps all our Joy,

Joy, possesses us with a gloomy pensiveness, and makes us even disdain our Being to consider soberly, that there is no man that liveth, and shall not see Death. It troubles us to think of those whom we most dearly love, that the time will come when they must be struck by the rude Hand of Death, be ravish'd from all that they love and enjoy of this World, and the Lov'd Creature must be turn'd into rottenness and undistinguishable Dust. The time will come that we must be parted from them either by their death or our own. We our selves must inevitably go the way of all flesh, and leave them if they do not leave us : Within a little while we must be separated from all that is most dear and comfortable to us of this World. Against these griefs our Religion affords us the best, and most effectual Consolations, that ever the World had. And a very pleasant remedy against them it is, to be assur'd, as we are by it, of a general Resurrection of the Dead ; when all that are in the Graves, or state of the Dead, shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, and live again : And after that, all shall live for ever ; and all Religious and good Persons, whose loss from this World we are apt chiefly to lament, shall rise all Glorious and Perfect, and so shall live in perfect Bliss, and Happiness for ever.

These are indeed very comfortable expectations. But methinks there is something more yet necessary to support us under the expectation of our own Death, or the Affliction which

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we feel for the Death of those whom we love. And it will somewhat allay the Pleasure of these expectations to consider, that these things may for ought we know be very far off. It may be many Hundreds, perhaps some Thousands of Years before they shall come, *The days of darkness*, as the Wise Man says, *are many*. We must needs, therefore, be very solicitous to know, what shall become of us immediately at our death ; and how we shall pass those many days of Darkness, before the bright dawnings of the Resurrection day shall arise upon us. We cannot chuse but wish we could know, that it shall be well with us and our dear Friends immediately upon our departure hence, and without this assurance it would be still with great grief and reluctance, that we should think of dying, and especially receive the Summons to it. But in this case too, the Holy Scripture, the Fountain of our Religion, affords us very effectual Consolations. It gives us a very good, and satisfying account of our separate State, the State of Death ; it assures us, that it shall be well with all Good and Holy Persons, even in the space between their Death, and their Resurrection : And informs us of several very comfortable particulars concerning that State.

Among the many places of Holy Scripture which speak of it, and which I shall have occasion to mention in the several parts of the following discourse ; I have thought fit to chuse this, which I have now read, for our present Text, because 'tis one of the most compre-

comprehensive ones. St. John tells here, that he *Heard a voice from Heaven, saying, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.* By those that *die in the Lord*, the Apostle means all Good and Holy Persons; among whom I doubt not to reckon the Infants of Religious and Christian Parents; especially such as have been Baptised, or were intended to be Baptised. All such he pronounces *Blessed* immediately upon their departure out of this World. He says, *Blessed are the dead; even those who are in the state of Death.* And he gives such reasons for their Blessedness as may belong to that State: In that he says, *They rest from their labours, and their Works do follow them.* Which suggests to us, that they are then freed from all the Evils and Inconveniences of this Life, and shall not meet with any other to give them any Labour or Exercise; and their Goodness and Religion shall be blest with some very sensible and comfortable reward. If their Works follow them in this fence, and it can have no other, then they do not cease to be when they die. And then also they have not a meer rest, as in a fenceless sleepy State, but they have some actual fruition of Good: They are happy and sensible that they are so, for no being can justly be said to be happy without being sensible of its Happiness. The words, *from henceforth*, in the Text, refer it to the particular occasion, on which the Spirit communicated this matter to St. John. He had told him, as we see in the Verses before the

Text,

Text, That there would be a time of very great Affliction, which would befall the Christian Church: Such a time as would severely try the Faith and Patience of the Saints: And *benceforth*, says he, or when ever this time comes it will be, and will be thought a great Advantage to be remov'd from this World by a Religious Death. Happy is the good Christian that is dead, and does not live to see these miseries, and to endure these Temptations and Trials.

In speaking to this Subject, I shall endeavour to prove the Blessedness of Good Souls, immediately upon their departure out of this World; and then suggest some use which may be made of this Truth. For the proof of it, to perform this in the shortest and most effectual method that I can, I shall represent in several particulars, gather'd evidently from Holy Scripture, wherein this Blessedness does consist.

1. All good Souls, upon their departure out of this World, are at the end of their Labours, and enter upon a State of Peace and Rest. This our Text expressly assures. It says, *They rest from their Labours*. The time of Work is now in this Life, the time of Reward is in the next. And when the good Soul is gone from hence, the Works and Labours of his Particular Office and Calling, are all at an end. The Ruler has no more the Burden or trouble of Ruling, and the Teacher has no more the Labour of teaching upon him, the Labourer lays his weary limbs to rest, and the Servant is free from his Master. The labour and care which was necessary to provide for and support the poor crasie

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Tabernacle of this Mortal Body, will now be at an end for ever. The happy Soul is set out of the reach of all Trouble and Affliction, and so is deliver'd from the labour of bearing them with patience and perseverance in his Duty. No sufferings shall come where he is; there is no Eye that weeps, no Tongue that complains, no Breast that swells with disconsolate sighs. He must be deliver'd from pains and diseases of his Body, because he lives at present without that: He shall not be troubled with the treachery of seeming Friends, nor with the Death or alteration of real ones: Nor shall he be ever afflicted any more with the persecutions of weak and imperfect Friends, or of Enemies. To that State we may apply what the Apostle says, *Rev. 21. 4.* *God shall wipe away all tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more Pain.* The Saint is indeed uncloath'd, as the Apostle speaks, he has left his Body in the Dust, he has parted at the same time with its importunate Appetites too, with all its backwardness to do good, and with all its inclination to do evil. He has parted with a very perverse Byass, as we may speak, which often made him move wrong when he had aimed right. He is deliver'd from that which cost him a great deal of pains to watch, to deny, to mortifie, that he might govern it, and keep himself innocent. He is now no more conversant with this World; all the pleasant things here he forsakes for ever. But then, he forsakes those things too, which were

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apt to steal away his Heart from God, his chiefest Good, to make him negligent, and forgetful of his true interests: Things which might indeed please his Body, but at the same time were dangerous to his Soul: Now he is deliver'd from all the Allurements, and Temptations to Sin, which this World is furnish'd with, and has no more War, or Opposition against them to Maintain. The happy Saint in his removal from this World, is taken out of the reach of his Adversary the Devil; who here, indeed, goes about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour, but shall never come near him there, nor give him the trouble to watch, or fight against him any more. The happy Soul has now no more to do for the working out of his Salvation. He is already in a good measure possest of it, and is now infallibly assur'd of the rest. His Happiness is now infallibly fixt, and he shall never know a fear, or be in danger of losing it. He has *Fought the good fight of Faith, has finished his Labourious Course, and henceforth is laid up for him a Crown of Righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge shall give him at the last Day.* And we must needs believe, this Rest will be extreamly pleasant after a great deal of labour; and his safety be much the more pleasing for the dangers which he has past and avoided. When he remembers what terrible conflicts he sustained against the Enemies of his Salvation, how weak he was in himself; how often he was foil'd and overcome, and yet did get a final Victory at length; this reflection highly pleases,

pleases, this adds abundant satisfaction and joy to the rest and safety of his present condition.

2. We may believe, that all good Souls at their departure out of the Body, do find themselves attended by kind, and good Angels. We are told, these are all Ministering Spirits sent forth to Minister for them who are Heirs of Salvation, *Heb. 1.14.* which intimates, that they are often employ'd in doing good Offices to good Men. We may therefore believe they will be commanded, and ready, to do this necessary and kind Office, and to receive into their care and charge, the departing Souls of such Men. And this we may reckon is taught us by our Saviour, *Luke 16. 22.* Where he says in a Parable concerning a good Man, That when he died, *He was carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom,* or a place of Bliss. He design'd to teach us herein, that this is a priviledge common to good Souls to be attended by Holy Angels at their departure out of the Body. The departing Saint does not find himself desolate and alone, in this new and unknown state, which would necessarily possess him with sadness and perplexity, while he must remain in doubt whither to go, and what must now become of him. No, he immediately finds he is amongst the kind and happy Inhabitants of Heaven, among those who care for and sooth him, and prove better Lovers and Friends than ever he met with before, and in this respect Heaven even comes to him before that he can be translated thither. These blessed Spirits we may believe are not silent at their meeting him.

We may reasonably suppose they deliver a kind and encouraging Message from the King of Heaven: They let the anxious Soul know, that it is a Favourite of his, and they are come to conduct it to the Lord Jesus, its Kind Mediatour and Saviour. We may suppose them speaking the kindest things imaginable, comforting the weary Soul, and entertaining it with applauses for past diligence in well-doing, for invincible Patience in suffering, for bold and steady opposition to the Enemies of its Salvation, and assuring him that his *Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*. They let him know that his Labours and sufferings are now for ever at an end; that his former contempt shall be now his Honour, his former Poverty shall redound to his Wealth, and all his pains and sufferings turn to everlasting Joys and Pleasures. And by what they appear to him, and by what they tell him he will easily believe, that he shall be translated quickly to a place and state, where he shall soon forget all his Sorrows and Afflictions: He begins already not to regret his departure from this World.

3. These kind and glorious Guides, and Companions of his Journey, conduct the glad Saint in a very little space of time, to a place of Bliss and Happiness. Scarce can he think over what they promise him, before he finds himself already in it. Our Saviour, we may observe, promised the penitent Thief, that he should be that very day with him in Paradise, and that, when it was now towards the end of the day. We may suppose, then, that they pass

pass with their beloved charge through all the Regions of the visible Heavens, with a motion so quick, as none in the material World can equal it. This Paradise St. *Paul* speaks of, 2 *Cor.* 12. and intimates, that he had been translated to it for some short space of time, in the 4th Verse of that Chapter: And he says it is in the Third Heaven, for in the 2d Verse, he had said, *He was caught up into the third Heaven.* There is not the least ground in the Text to interpret him, as speaking of two distinct places under these two Names. And we have yet further ground to remove this place from all the visible material World, in what St. *Paul* says again in the Fifth Chapter of this Epistle, at the first Verse: Where he speaks of the Habitation which receives the Souls of good Men, when the Tabernacles of their Bodies are dissolv'd, and calls it, *An house not made with Hands Eternal, and in the Heavens.* He says, it is in the Heavens, and is an Eternal House: And therefore teaches us to conclude, that it is above those Heavens which shall at the last day be dissolv'd, as the Scripture tells us the visible Heavens and the Earth shall be. And since this their Habitation is call'd by the Apostle an Eternal House, I think this renders it very probable, that the place where the separate Souls of good Men dwell, is the same with that, which they shall dwell again in after the Resurrection of their Bodies. This place is all serene and calm, all Beautiful and Harmonious. A bright, eternal Day constantly there shines with a very great but a

very pleasing Glory. Of this, perhaps, the Apostle speaks, *Rev. 21.23*. When he says, of what he calls the New *Jerusalem*, *That it had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it. For the Glory of God did enlighten it, and the Lamb was the Light thereof*, meaning hereby the Lord Jesus Christ. This Place is certainly furnish'd with all that the Inhabitants can desire it to have for their Convenience and Pleasure. It has, as we may say, the beauty of an Eternal Spring, and the Wealth and Plenty too of an Eternal Autumn. Since God has furnish'd this World we live in now, which is common to Men and Beasts, and which bad as well as good Men enjoy, with so great abundance, and with so admirable a variety of good things, since he causes this Sun to shine, and fertile showers to fall now on the Just, and on the Unjust; what a Glory, must we believe, will adorn, and what plenty of good must fill that better World, which is design'd only for good of Men, and the peculiar Favourites of Heaven. Those who are there we may be sure will have no need of any of the good things which they left below, and therefore we need not doubt but they have lost even the desire to them too. If I or my departed Friend, a Man may say, must in Death forsake the most glorious Palaces, the most Delightful Prospect, the most delicious Gardens, the richest Furniture, and all that can make a Habitation Commodious, Pleasant, and Glorious; yet to come to this place, we may be sure will soon teach us to disdain all that we have left

left below. This is the happy Kingdom prepared for good Men from the Foundation of the World of which the earthly Paradise, in which *Adam* in his Innocency dwelt, was but a poor Type, and a shady Representation. The Saint arriv'd here will soon say, it is good to be here, and will not at all desire to return to the low, dark, miserable Earth again. He will certainly be unspeakably glad, to think, that he shall make his eternal abode here.

4. The separate Soul of a good Man is happy, even immediately upon his departure hence, in its own most excellent Qualifications. His Graces and Virtues like Plants in an unkind climate, could not thrive so well in this adverse World as to attain their just growth and maturity. The Appetites of the Body, the Allurements of this World, the Temptations of the Devil did all oppose them here. But as soon as he is set free from the Body, and out of the reach of other Enemies, they begin to flourish. The Divine Life, the Principle of these, finds all clog and oppression now taken off, and exerts it self freely, and acts more perfectly than it could do before. So that, the Inhabitants of this pleasant World are said to be *The Spirits of just Men made perfect*, *Heb. 12. 13.* Now the Understanding is perfectly enlightened, and the happy Saint sees clearly and distinctly the wonderful truths of our Religion. If he had receiv'd any wrong Impressions before in these matters, they are now perfectly remov'd. There is no uncomfortable doubt, no disparaging error remaining

In his mind. And the discovery of former mistakes, or the finding that he had none, by this bright light which is now shed into him, are both of them things which will be highly pleasing to the Soul. Divine Knowledge is accounted a rich Treasure, and a noble glorious Ornament among the Inhabitants of Heaven. Again, the Will of the Good Men is now perfectly rectified and cur'd. It has regain'd all its pleasing Liberty, it is no longer subject to a false Byass. It steadily fixes upon the Chief Good, the center of Happiness and Rest. It is no longer wavering or undetermin'd between God and this World, which if it were it must needs be still unhappy. It has found the Chief Good, is come to some enjoyment of him, and in him it rests with perfect satisfaction and content. Now, too, all the affections of the Soul are well order'd and regular; all is, then, compos'd and at peace within him, there are no disagreeing contesting Principles to disturb him. He shall never more have reason to complain, that the good which he would he does not, and the evil which he would not that he does, he will never fall out with nor rebuke himself for any thing any more. Now the happy Saint enjoys greater manifestations of the Divine Glory, and is blest and favour'd with greater exercises of the Love of God, than ever he receiv'd before: And these things do, to a higher degree, kindle and inflame his Love to God; now he may better than ever be said to dwell in Love. The Beauty and the Goodness of the chief good, tho' not yet discover'd in the best and highest degree,

degree, do now appear to him so glorious as does even transform him into Love, all his Powers become subject to Love, this is the happy principle of all his actions, and this makes all his present employment incomparably pleasant : He contemplates, praises, adores the great God, whom he loves, and considers the wonderful works in that glorious World with unspeakable delight. Every thing moves and pleases his Love, and he is continually ravished in the pleasing Ardours of Divine Love. Now the Saint perfectly submits and resigns himself without the least reluctance to the good Pleasure of God : And therefore he is perfectly easie and contented with his condition, tho that be not yet perfectly happy. He reposes a firm trust and confidence in God ; whom he now, more than ever, believes to be God Abundant in Goodness, and in Truth, and without any doubt expects, in God's due time, to see the happy and desir'd Redemption of his Body. And with all this Rectitude and Holiness, he cannot chuse but be highly pleased in himself : This is that he groan'd, and long'd, and labour'd after during his abode on Earth, and he must needs be very joyful to receive the accomplishment of long and ardent desires. And it is the more pleasing to him to be thus compleatly sanctified, in consideration, that all the company which he is to dwell with for ever are so too. Hence he knows he shall hereby be the more pleasing to them ; He reckons, indeed, that he should be sadly ashamed, and could have no enjoyment of himself, if he were

unlike to all the Company there. But now knowing and finding himself such as they, he believes himself the more acceptable to them, and therefore he is also the more easie, and the more pleasing to himself.

5. The excellent society which the Saint shall there enjoy of his Fellow Creatures, shall add much to his Happiness. He shall not spend his long abode there in an uncomfortable Solitude: Even in this Paradise it would *not be good for Man to be alone*. He shall therefore here enjoy much, and that very excellent Society. He, then, meets and shall dwell for ever with, all those excellent Persons, those brave examples of Piety and Virtue whom he has seen, or, heard or read of in this World: With the goodly fellowship of the Prophets and Apostles, the Noble Army of Martyrs and Confessors. There he shall meet perhaps many dear Relations, and intimate Friends, and perhaps some Enemies, who shall then, to his great joy and satisfaction, be perfectly reconcil'd to him; which was that he most passionately desired before, but it may be could not find means to accomplish it. Souls joyn'd below in virtuous Love, and sad at parting here, shall meet again there, and love again, and dwell together for ever. He shall dwell with the Souls of all the good Men that have ever liv'd in this World: And the Company there is *a great multitude, which no Man can number, of all Nations, and Kindred, and People, and Languages*, as the Apostle seems to represent it, *Rev. 7. 9.* That mighty number is render'd

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Beautiful by Order, and kept in perfect Peace and Concord, by Reverence to the King of Heaven, and Love to one another. No Pride nor Envy, no Malice nor Treachery, no Ambition, nor Covetousness ever come there to disturb the Peace. To that Holy Place no unclean thing can come: Which the Apostle seems to tell us, in *Rev. 21.27.* where he says of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever loveth or maketh a Lie.* All the Company there are perfected Saints; and all wickedness of Men and Devils is for ever banish'd thence, and by consequence all those Passions and Vices which disquiet this World, and spoil the Pleasures of Society and Conversation, shall be Strangers there. All the Company of Heaven are satisfied with their own Happiness, and by mutual Love are pleased with the Happiness and Glory of each other; it may be said, every one does in a manner enjoy the Happiness of all, since that is a delight to every one. And with what ravishing Conversation, with what Indearments, with what charming Discourse may we justly suppose so excellent Persons do entertain one another! How pleasant and delightful must they, who are so wise, and so full of Love, make themselves to one another! How pleasant too is their unanimous concurrence in the high Praises of God! None there dissent from, or despise what others honour God by: Nor will purchase to themselves a fancied mistaken Purity at the boast of Disobedience: But all the company do chearfully joyn

joyn in the Common Praises, of the most High God, and his Wonderful Works. O happy World ! O Blessed Peaceful Society ! How much might the strifes, the contentions, and the confusions of this World justly make one long to be there !

Further, To the Society of the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, the Holy Scripture adds, as Inhabitants of the World above, *an innumerable company of Angels*. The Souls of good Men in that Happy place ; shall be blest with the frequent visits, and converses of those Kind and Glorious Spirits. They view the brighter Glories of the Deity, and such as are yet undiscover'd to the Saints : And render their Conversation very charming, when they tell what they know of the Greatnes and Goodness of God : What their high capacity, and long experience, and great opportunity of Learning has taught them, of the Nature, the Love, and the Works of God ! And to find them so full of Love, and so abundant in expressions of Kindnes, who dwell in the Holiest of all, and are admitted to the immediate presence of the King of Heaven, must needs be a very joyous and comfortable thing to the Souls of good Men, especially as it will assure them of the favour and good will of God himself to them.

This is the Society to whom the departing Souls of good Men go, and with whom they must dwell for ever ! And with such as these, how kindly, how chearfully must a good Soul be receiv'd at his first coming amongst them !

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What welcomes, what applauds, what congratulations will they give him ! If there be Joy in Heaven at the Conversion of a Sinner, how much rather will there be great Joy at his Salvation, when he has conquer'd all his Enemies, escaped all Danger, and is landed safe at the Haven of Bliss ! And, then, it must be great and unspeakable Joy to the Saint himself to be brought among those who receive him with so much joy and kindness.

6. The highest point of the Felicity which departed Saints enjoy in their separate State, is, that they dwell with Jesus Christ himself; they rejoice in his Glory, and partake of his Love. This the Holy Scripture abundantly teaches us. He himself intimates this, in his saying to the Penitent Thief, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*: And in that kind Prayer for his Followers, *John 17. 24. Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory.* The Apostle *Paul* assures us this may be expected in his saying, *I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, Phil. 1. 23.* And he speaks of being *Absent from the Body, and present with the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 8.* He evidently speaks of the state of the seperate Soul, when it is without its Body, and teaches that even then it dwells in the Blissful Presence of Jesus Christ. To him, then, the happy Soul of a good Man is soon conducted upon its departure hence: To the Mighty Jesus, the Glorious King of Heaven, and the great Lover of Souls. And without doubt he will receive it with the most ravishing

ing demonstrations of Kindness. He who lov'd it so well as to come himself from Heaven, and to die, that he might Redeem and Save it: Who has lov'd it so well as to sanctifie, and to guide it by his Good Spirit; with great Patience to bear with many Infirmitieſ and Offences, and to continue ſtill his care of it, while it abode in this World. He will doubtleſs receive with great kindness the purchase of his Blood, and of his Care. And by him the good Soul ſhall hear all its excellent Vertues applaudeſ; and the good Works he has done on Earth to the Glory of God, and the Good, but eſpecially the Salvation of Mankind highly commendeſ. It ſhall hear with joy the Loving Jesus ſay, *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter thou into thy Masters Joy.* And the Saints Kind and Gracious Master and Lord now heaps Unſpeakable Favours and Gloriouſ Honours upon him. He is always communicating ſome inestimable expreſſions of his Love. And now, more than ever before, will the Saint have reaſon to ſay as the Spouſe in that matchleſs Song of Loves, *As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, ſo is my beloved among the Sons; I ſit under his shadow with great delight, and O how ſweet is his Fruit to my taste.* *He has brought me now into his banqueting House* indeed, and *his banner over me is Love.* O I am almoſt overcome with Love, the tyrannous pleasure is too much for me to bear; and becauſe it is ſo, *His left hand is under my head, while his right hand doth embrace me.* He, that I may be able to ſustain my joy, kindly ſtains

stains me. No Words certainly can express, no Thought can conceive, the Raptures, the Extasies of Joy, which the happy Saints in Heaven feel, when they receive the ravishing Loves of the Loving Jesus. The Saint is rejoiced at the Dignity and Honour of Jesus, whom he ardently loves, to see him at God's right Hand, invested with Authority and Power over all things in Heaven. He is glad of this for his own sake, because he can from thence with great assurance expect, that in due time his dissolv'd Body shall be raised up from the Dust. He is rejoiced to see in the glorified Body of Jesus a certain pledge, and assurance of the Resurrection of his own: And especially to see also therein a Pattern of his own raised Body: To consider that the poor, vile, contemptible, mortal Body, which he dwelt in on Earth, shall when 'tis raised again, be Cloathed with Glory, and Adorn'd with Celestial Beauty, and be fashioned like to Christ's Glorious Body.

Thus far, I doubt not, we may go in representing the Blessed state of those who are Dead in the Lord: For thus far the Holy Scripture it self does Evidently lead us. And the Scripture leaves us to believe, that the Departed Saints have not yet attained their utmost degree of Bliss in the Beatifick Vision of God. They remain in their separate state, under an effect of Sin, and a mark of the Divine Displeasure against it. And so long it may seem very fit and agreeable, that the great Judge and Governor of the World do keep them at
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some distance from himself, and treat with them by the intervention of their Mediator. But all this while they enjoy, in this Sacred Temple where they dwell, the happy presence of Jesus their High Priest: And when the time of the general Resurrection is come, and the last Judgment is over, and Jesus Christ, as the Apostle says, shall deliver up the Kingdom to his Father, his Mediation shall be at an end, and the Father, who is eminently call'd God, shall be all in all. Then shall the vail be taken away, the way into the Holiest of all shall be open'd; and the happy Saints shall be admitted to the immediate Fruition, and the happy Vision of God: Which is more than, either in this World or that above, they have enjoy'd before.

I come now to suggest what Improvement may be made of what has been said: Which I shall do very briefly in the following particulars.

These things should excite men to an earnest endeavour to prepare themselves for their departure hence. They require, that we take a great deal of care to put our selves into such a posture, that whenever our Death overtakes us, we may *die in the Lord*. To which purpose we must break off from all manner of Wick-edness, and betake our selves to all Holiness, and Virtuous Living. It is only the Religious and Good Man who is Blessed in his Death, because *He rests from his Labours and his Works follow him.*

And having taken care to put our selves into this happy posture, the frequent thoughts
of

of this Blessedness should reconcile us to the thoughts of our own Death ; they should make us willing to die. Why should we be still fond of living amidst the Miseries, the Labours, the Dangers, and the Temptations of this World, when we shall in Death be translated to Rest, and Safety, and Happiness. It would become all Christians, what he says of himself and some others, to be *willing rather to be absent from the Body*, that they might be *present with the Lord*. Should a man that has indeed been industrious to prepare for a happy departure hence, be after all that he has done unwilling to depart ? Should we be loth to lay down this Flesh, when we have often denied it, have learnt to contradict its Appetites, and have well mortified it ? Have we truly renounced this World, and yet are unwilling to leave it ? And truly set our Affections on things above, and yet would not go to them ? It is greatly to be fear'd, that our unwillingness to depart, proceeds in a great measure from our unfitness for it, and because we have neglected these preparations of our selves. Let us, then, diligently apply our selves to such preparation, that we may be willing to undergo what we cannot avoid, that we may have hope in Death, and be contented to leave temporal good things, by virtue of an assurance, that we shall go to enjoy eternal Ones.

These things should also excite in Men a great concern and endeavour to promote Piety and Virtue, as much as they may among their Relations and Acquaintance, and especially

ally in those who are peculiarly dear to them. We may justly think, that to have been industrious towards the bringing others to Heaven, is a thing very Honourable, and of great esteem in that kind and happy World: And that the Company of any such as we have been instrumental to bring thither, shall be the most pleasant and acceptable of any. To possess them with Piety and Vertue who are very dear to us, is to provide for our great comfort in their Death, if it pleased God to call them away before us. When, if they are religious here, we might assure our selves they are gone to Happiness; and are indeed become more happy by their departure than all our most prodigal wishes, or kindest designs for them could have made them here.

And it should comfort us in the death of Religious and Excellent Persons, to consider, that they are still, tho they are gone hence. They are translated to Bliss. They are deliver'd from the miseries of this sinful World, are entered into Rest, and made partakers of Heaven's eternal Joys. Could I look into the Celestial Paradise, a mourning Person may say, I might there see my Faithful Friend, or my tender Parent, my loving Consort, or my dear Child amidst throngs of bright rejoicing Spirits, himself all bright, and all joyous too; caressed by the Prince of Love the Blessed Jesus, and joyn'd with other glad Souls in the Harmonious Praises of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We may comfort our selves too with hopes of meeting them again in that Happiness, if we will

will take care to get thither our selves, and promise our selves the content and satisfaction of enjoying them again, within a little while, more lovely and more happy than here; and to meet to dwell with them for ever. Let us consider this very comfortable Truth in our Text that, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, because they rest from their Labours and their Works do follow them:* And let us comfort our selves and one Another with these words.

Now to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, &c.

THE
PRAYER.

Almighty and most merciful God, who art abundant in Goodness, and delightest to bestow Blessings and Favours upon thy Creatures. It is thou that hast made, us and not we our selves, and thy Wisdom and Goodness design'd and fitted us, in our Creation, to be perfectly and perpetually happy. But alas, we foolish and guilty Creatures have by our Sin and Perverseness opposed, and contradicted thy gracious Design, to our own great Hurt and Damage. We have incurred thy most just Wrath and Displeasure, and so have pull'd down great Misery and Affliction upon our selves. We see, O Lord, and acknowledge thy great Displeasure against our Sins, in that thou hast doomed these Bodies of ours, which thy infinite Wisdom has curiously fram'd, to be dissolved and turn'd to Dust, and hast condemn'd our Souls to abide long in a preternatural and a separate

State: Long must our wretched Bodies be dissolved into Dust, and be destitute and incapable of any Sense of thy Goodness. O Lord, we fear thy Wrath, we tremble at thy Displeasure, and from thy Hatred against our Sins we will learn to hate them and to forsake all that is evil. We desire with a hearty Repentance, and a true Faith to turn unto thee. We fly O Lord, from thy just Displeasure to thy glorious Mercy in Christ, by whose Mediation thou wilt forgive Iniquity, Transgression and Sin. We pray thee, for his sake, to pardon all our past Transgressions, and receive us into thy Favour: And then we shall hope, that even this Curse which our Sins have brought upon us, shall be turned into a Blessing. And as all things shall work together for good to them that love God; so even our Death shall be Life to us, our Loss of this World the gaining of a better, and the Fall of our mortal Bodies shall redound to the Advantage of our Souls. Blessed be thy Name, that we may have Hope in our Death. O Lord sanctifie us we beseech thee, and cleanse us from all Unrighteousness, that we may be fit for that holy Place, that Paradise above, where no unclean thing can come. And let us have to fortifie us against the Threatnings of our Mortality, the comfortable and assured Expectations, that when the earthly Tabernacles of our Bodies shall be dissolved, we shall be received into an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens; while our Bodies lie dead, yet our Souls shall live, and that a more free, more active, and sensible and happy Life than what they now enjoy; that when we are called away from all our kind Friends, and comfortable Enjoyments in this World, we shall be translated to the happy Abode and Society of the Spirits of just Men made perfect, to an innumerable Company of Angels, and when we are absent from the Body, that we shall be present with the Lord, and shall enjoy the Happiness of a near and intimate Communion with our most kind Saviour and Redeemer. Let this Hope encourage us in our Duty,

and

The Prayer. = 250

and make us stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, as knowing that our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

We humbly recommend to thy infinite Mercy, all sorts and Conditions of Men. Let the wretched World, O Lord, partake of thy Favour and Goodness according to their several Necessities in temporal and spiritual Mercies. Pour down thy good Spirit plentifully upon thy Church, and encrease in it thereby all true Piety and Vertue: And grant that all Christians may live so as becomes the Citizens of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*. We pray thee bleſſ in particular that Part of thy Church which thou haſt planted in these Nations. O make it to bring forth Fruit abundantly to thy Glory, according to the Plenty of the means of Grace afforded us, and do thou long continue those blessed Dews of Heaven upon us. Bleſſ in particular our most gracious King, grant him in Health and Prosperity, long to live, and reign over us; and grant that under him we may enjoy Tranquility and Peace: Bleſſ the Royal Family with a great Encrease, and with Plenty of all Noble and Royal Endowments, and grant that we may be happy in it, and duly obedient to it for ever. Be pleased to look in Mercy upon our Friends, and Relations, and Benefactors, to lead them in the Ways of Truth, Peace, and Righteousness, and bring them at laſt to thy Heavenly Kingdom. We thank thee for all the Mercies of our Lives, for those of this Day in particular, and especially for the Means of Grace, and the Hopes of Glory. Let us not receive any Instance of thy Favour in vain, but to thy Glory and our Salvation. We pray thee let us be thy Care this Night, give us safe and comfortable Rest, and renewed Strength thereby to serve and glorifie thee in our several Businesſes and Duties. All we humbly ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, in whose Words alſo we ſum up and conclude our Requests, ſaying,

Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.

THE
Final and Compleat
HAPPINESS
O F
GOOD MEN
REPRESENTED.

The first Part.

Let us Pray.

*PRevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most grac-
ious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that
in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we
may glorifie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain
Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Psal. 16. 11.

*In thy Presence is Fulness of Joy, at thy
Right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.*

IT pleased the Great Sovereign of the World,
in making several sorts of Creatures capa-
ble of Happiness, to set some of them at first
in the highest state of it, which they were ca-
pable

pable to enjoy. Thus he dispos'd of the Angels above, and the Animals below us, if we may reckon these capable of Happiness. And as for Mankind, he did make them indeed very happy at first, but not in that highest degree which he intended they should obtain. He order'd they should arrive to this, but upon the condition, and in the way of behaving themselves well, and doing their Duty to him in a lower state of Happiness: And there was another and a higher design'd them, to which all Men should, without Death have been translated if we had not sinned, after a time spent in pious and virtuous living on Earth; which is that state our Saviour means when he speaks of a *Kingdom prepared for good Men from the Foundation of the World*. It is, then according to the Original Design of our Creation, That our perfect compleat Felicity is not to be attained in this Life: Even in our best Condition on Earth, we had still a better to aim at, and seek after; Much rather have we this to do now, when our Sin has pulled a Curse upon this World, and made the Creature subject to Vanity, and brought upon us a great deal of Misery and Vexation. And it is also, we must know, according to the Creator's original Design, That this Life is a Time of work and well-doing, and the other is chiefly the Time of Rewards. Now we must procure our highest State of Felicity by good, and virtuous living, and hereafter chiefly, must we receive the Rewards of this in the Attainment of that Felicity.

It shall be the Business of this Discourse to gather together, and represent, in the best Method that I can, what the holy Scripture tells us of the final, and consummate Happiness of good Men; the glorious Rewards prepared for our present Piety and Virtue. We have a summary and comprehensive Account of this Matter in our present Text, where the Psalmist says to God, *In thy Presence is Fullness of Joy, at thy Right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.* I shall not spend any Time in taking notice of the Connexion of these Words, but at present consider them absolutely and alone. And the Psalmist here, as a learned Man well observes, (*Muis in loc.*) seems to represent Almighty God as a Bounteous, Munificent Prince, calling his Favourites into his Presence, and with a full Hand largely bestowing upon them considerable Favours, the Testimonies, and Expressions of his Love and Esteem. He expresses, too, the Pleasure and Joy which this shall be to them, even *Fullness of Joy*: and the long Duration of the Happiness, *In Pleasures for evermore.* I shall therefore, from these Words, represent the final, perfect Happiness of Man, as well as I can, under these three general Heads of Discourse.

1. I shall observe, what they are to be who shall attain this Happiness.
2. I shall represent what it is that they shall enjoy.
3. I shall illustrate a little the Import of this general Qualification of the Happiness mentioned, which is, That it shall continue for evermore.

I begin with the first of these: To represent what the Scripture teaches us they shall be who shall attain the final, perfect Happiness of Mankind, for even this is a great Part of that Happiness. The holy Scripture teaches us there will be granted in Heaven, mighty Improvements of our selves. And this, we may suppose, is what the Psalmist chiefly meant, under the Name of the Pleasures at God's Right Hand. This Head contains those bounteous Gifts which he will bestow upon the blessed Saints when they are advanced to Heaven. To represent this matter the more distinctly, I must shew what will be the Condition, and Improvement of the Bodies of the Saints in Heaven: And what also will be the Advantages and Improvement of their Souls.

Let us see, in the first place, what will be the Excellencies and Improvements of the Bodies of the Saints in that glorious, exalted State. As their dead Bodies shall be raised to Life again, so they must, indeed of necessity, be mightily improved; that they may be fit Habitations, and Instruments for their exalted Souls to dwell in, and may be capable to serve the excellent Operations of such, and perform the high Employments of Heaven: That they may be fit to dwell in a much more beautiful and glorious World, and be suitable Companions to the glorious Angels. The Apostle therefore says, *Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven*: To signify, that this dull Lump of Earth is not a fit Inhabitant for those glorious Mansions and Enjoyments which the

Saints are advanced to in Heaven. And he says of those who shall be found living upon Earth at the last day, that although they shall not die, yet they shall all be changed in a moment; and we may believe, that, as all Mankind should have been translated to Heaven without dying, as *Enoch* and *Elias* were, so they also should have been changed upon that Translation. But, to make us the more sensible of the Improvement of the Bodies of the Saints: The holy Scripture acquaints us with these following Particulars concerning it.

1. They shall at their Resurrection and Admission into Heaven, become very beautiful and glorious. When the Prophet *Daniel* had spoken of the Resurrection of the Dead (*Dan.* 12. 2.) He goes on, and says (in *verse 3.*) *They that be wise*, meaning good Men, *shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament*, and *they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever, and ever.* So that he intimates, their Bodies shall be endowed in Heaven with a very glorious Splendour and Brightness. Our Saviour again, in *Mat.* 13. 43. speaking of the same matter says, *Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* And, *these vile Bodies* the Apostle says, shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious Body (*Phil.* 3. 2.) which certainly speaks, that they shall be cloath'd with a very wonderful Brightness: They in their Measure too shall be cloath'd with Light as with a Garment.

Further, If the Bodies of the Saints shall have the Beauty of such Glory and Brightness, we

we cannot imagin that they will want the Beauty of a Compleatnes, and Perfection of their Parts, and of an exact Proportion between them. All Defects of Members, all Deformity shall be there perfectly removed ; there shall be no Uncomeliness of Visage, no mean and contemptible Appearance, no Weaknes or want of any Part to disparage their Bodies in Heaven.

But when the Saints receive them, thus improved from the poor, homely, contemptible Dust ; how glad, how joyful will they be ! How willingly must the Soul enter its former Habitation, which it did desire to return to, when it finds the poor Tabernacle or Cottage, improved into a Pallace. The blessed Saints will be justly pleas'd with their Ornament then, because 'tis in a manner their own : They are fine, not with the Spoils of other Creatures, but with their innate adorning , and their cloathing is indeed their Beauty, for it dwells in themselves. By vertue of this they are suited to the glorious Place which they dwell in, and to the beautiful splendid Company of Angels, and to the Glory of the Divine Presence. And so they can enjoy the Glory of Heaven, whereas without their own Glory and Brightnes they must have been utterly ashamed and confounded there.

2. The Bodies of the Saints in Heaven shall be endowed with great Activity, and Vigor. The Apostle calls them *Spiritual Bodies*, and in they shall put on a Property of Spirits. They shall act without Wearines what they have to do, and shall never need any Refreshment or Rest :

Rest : They shall act without Difficulty, and Labour, and therefore without any Weariness. The gross and heavy Body we now live in does incline towards this Earth, but the Celestial Body loses all its Weight, and Inclination one way, and therefore freely moves it self any way ; and so traverses perhaps the vast Spaces of that glorious World, viewing with great Delight the various pleasing Wonders there, and this without any Fatigue or Trouble. This corruptible Body which we now have, as a wise Man said, presseth down the Soul. It hangs like a Clog and Load upon the Faculties of the Mind, which made saint *Paul* speak of it as a *Burden*, (2 Cor. 5. 4.) But then it is so advantageously changed, that it shall be no more a Burden to the Soul, than Wings to a Bird, or Sails to a Ship. It will always be ready to serve the most spritely, and noble Operations of the Soul, so far as this has occasion to employ it. The Saints are therefore capable to entertain themselves continually with the Pleasures of their Condition, and no Pleasure they enjoy shall ever become flat or tasteless, when the Faculty that enjoys them never tires. And, then, the Pleasures of Divine Contemplation, the Pleasures of ardent Devotion, and thankful Praise will be constantly, and yet unweariedly enjoyed. Therefore the Apostle says of the Inhabitants of Heaven, *They rest not Day and Night* saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come,* (Rev. 4.8.)

3. Whatever Senses remain, they shall be exercised too, and shall be pleased with very agree-

agreeable and delightful Objects. Some Sensations shall not remain, because they would rather encumber and lessen that Happiness than promote it. 'Tis the real Advantage of that State to be without the present Pleasures of eating and drinking: For thereby 'tis freed also from the Pain and Inconvenience of Hunger and Thirst, and from all the Care and Labour to satisfie these. The Apostle therefore, in Commendation of that State says, *They, who are there, shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more,* (Rev. 7.16.) Our Saviour says too, that *they shall be like the Angels in Heaven.* What Sensations they shall have no use of shall not remain there, because they may be happy enough without them, and because the Desires, which heighten the Pleasure of them now, are really such an Inconvenience as Heaven shall not be acquainted with.

Perhaps the Sense of feeling in general may remain, and so be pleased with the easie Temperature of that kind World, which will be always agreeable to this Sence, and will never afflict it with the Summers parching Heat, or the Winters pinching Cold; which the Apostle seems to suggest when he says, in the fore-mentioned Place, *Neither shall the Sun light upon them, nor the Heat incommod those who dwell there.*

But the nobler Sensations will without doubt remain in Heaven; and the Faculties of seeing and hearing we may easily believe will be exercised and pleased there. Many things may be there delightful to the Eye which we cannot now

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conceive: And whatever does now please this Sense, we may justly think will be in a far more excellent sort there. That Beauty, and Order, Proportion, and Light, Variety, and Extent which is so pleasing to the Eye now, will be in much greater Perfection, and therefore much more please it in Heaven. We may expect, this Sense shall be pleased with the Beauty and Splendor which is put upon themselves: And also, with that excellent Beauty which they shall see their happy Friends adorned with, such as shall render them incomparably more amiable and lovely than ever they were before. It shall doubtless be highly pleased to view their glorified Saviour: To see him out-shining the most glorious Angels, and in Excellency, and Dignity advanc'd above those Thrones, and Principalities, and Powers. And, as that is a much more glorious World than this, the Faculty must be mightily strengthened and improved: For that which cannot now bear the direct Beams of this Sun, shall there converse with an innumerable Company of much brighter Lights than he: And must behold without being dazled or confounded, that unconceivable Glory of God which shall there be discovered.

Further, as we may justly believe, that the Inhabitants of that blessed World are not a ful-
len, silent Company, so we may expect that the hearing Faculty will be very pleasantly en-
tertained there too. This will convey to each Saint the Subjects of their pleasing Conversations with each other. And as they are all vastly ini-
proved

proved both in Knowledge and Love, their Conversation must be mightily improved too, and the Pleasure of it must be must unconceivably great. And as they are to spend an Eternity in the joint Praises of the great Author of their Being and Happiness, so without doubt there will be an admirable Harmony in their Praises: They will not utter them in any harsh discordant Sounds, nor in a wild Confusion: But we may justly believe they will be founded forth in the exactest Measure, and sweetest Concord that can be, and will create to each of the glad saints a Pleasure far excelling that which the most charming Musick can give to any of us here.

4. In the last place, the Bodies of the Saints in Heaven shall be blest with a happy Immortality. This excellent Property of Spirits they shall put on too. The Apostle says of our Bodies, *They are sown in Corruption, they shall be raised in Incorruption, and this Mortal shall put on Immortality, and Death shall be swallowed up in Victory.* Death it self shall then die, and cease to tyrannize any more over the wretched Sons of Men. In this our present dying Life our poor frail Bodies are subject to the Decays of Age, and the Infirmities of Sickness; which blast our Beauty, and abate our Strength and Vigour; which lessen and deprive us of Pleasure, and afflict us with grievous Pain, and at length dissolve the Mortal Body into Dust. But when they are brought to Heaven they are for ever freed from all these things. As they shall die no more, they shall no more decay, nor be sick,

sick, or in Pain. They shall enjoy there a perpetual Health and Soundness, a perpetual Vigor and Activity, and a perfect perpetual Beauty. They shall be for ever free from either the Care to live, or the Fear of dying. And this Advantage of Immortality greatly heightens all the other: This assures the Enjoyment of them all for ever.

These are the happy Improvements which the Bodies of the Saints shall gain in Heaven. Oh how joyful will they be to consider all these Excellencies and Advantages of them! How thankful must they needs be to the infinite Bounty of God? Which communicates Lustre and Glory to a dark Clod of Earth! And mighty Activity, Sense and Power to a dull, heavy, weak thing! And the Honour of Eternity, and Unchangeableness to a poor Mortal Composition! If a good Man could see Reason to praise Almighty God for the Mortal Body in which he dwelt on Earth, because that was very curiously wrought and wonderfully framed, much more reason will every Saint have to magnifie and praise the Divine Bounty and Goodness for his Heavenly and Glorified Body.

I proceed in the second place to consider, and represent the happy and glorious Improvement which the Souls of the Saints shall also obtain in Heaven: For they shall be exceedingly advanced in that which is their greatest Excellency. I may represent this Matter in this general and short account of it: The Saints in Heaven shall be made perfect in Holiness, and advanced in this to the highest Measures and Degrees which

such

such Creatures are capable to receive. This is an Advantage they cannot reach till they come to Heaven, but there they do attain to it, and it is a great Part of the Happiness there. The holy Scripture teaches us that this will be obtained in Heaven. It may be concluded from hence, that, of Good Men departed this Life, it is said, *they rest from their Labours*, which intimates that the Labour to improve in Holiness shall with them be at an end, as well as other Labours. Again, the Saints in Heaven are called by the Apostle, *The Spirit of Just Men made perfect*, (Heb. 12.23.) And the Psalmist speaking of his Admission into Heaven says, *I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness*, Psal. 17.15.) When I am delivered from this stupid, sleepy Life into that more sensible, and lively, and active one above, then shall I be satisfied with thy Likeness: Then will the Divine Image in Righteousness and true Holiness be compleat in me. It is of this State of the Church most true, and perhaps of this chiefly meant, what her heavenly Lover the blessed Jesus is represented saying, (Cant. 4.9.) *Thou art all fair my Love, there is no Spot in thee.* Every thing conceivable under the Notion of a Moral Excellency which the humane Nature is capable of, is there to be found with the happy Saints, and they have it deep wrought into their Nature and Being. And when the Saints, by being so near to God as they are in Heaven, do the better know what the Perfection of the Divine Image requires, and wherein it consists, and do also finde every Lineament and Character

of

of that Glory appearing in themselves, this must needs be exceeding great Joy and Pleasure to them.

But to make the Happiness of this advanc'd and perfect Holiness of the Saints in Heaven, the more distinctly appear: I think fit to represent it under these three different Aspects. (1.) As it regards the Saint himself in whom it dwells. (2.) As it regards Almighty God. (3.) As it regards the other happy Inhabitants of Heaven.

Let us first consider this, as it regards the Saint himself, and we shall easily see there are very joyful Advantages in it in this respect.

And this State of Mind, we must know, is perfectly agreeing to the original and essential Frame and Constitution of the humane Nature: Our very Nature was design'd and fitted for it in our Creation: A sinful State is preternatural, but this is natural to Mankind. All Sin and Wickedness is the Sickness and Disease of the Soul, and the Disorder of our Faculties: By consequence this must needs be very uneasy and full of Pain; and the Scripture rightly says, a wicked Man can never be at rest, and there is no *Peace to the Wicked*. Every thing in the Soul out of due place and order, is uneasy as well as in the Body. But this happy State of Mind is the peaceful rectitude, the orderly Composure of it: This restores the Soul to it self, to its original and natural Frame and Constitution: Hence are the Practises of Piety and Virtue called by the wise Man, the *Ways of Pleasantness and Peace*. To improve in Holiness is to increase

crease in the Health and Soundness of the Soul, and to be compleat and perfect in that is, to be in perfect Health, and therefore also in perfect Peace. The Soul has now no inward Torment, or Vexation, feels no more self-rebukes, is no longer liable to an uneasie self-loathing Discontent: She is now perfectly well, and finds her self so, and cannot chuse but rejoice in the Ease, the Tranquility, and Peacefulness of her present Condition.

This State of Mind is the perfecting of the Man, as Wickedness is the wretched and disparaging Corruption and Depravation of the humane Nature. In the Perfection of Holiness, he is advanced to the greatest Degrees of Worth and Excellency which he was design'd for, and is capable of: This is *the Fulness of the Stature of a perfect Man.* A diseased unnatural State of Mind stints the Growth, as well as it is painful and uneasie; and under it a Man can never attain the true Dignity and Excellency of a rational Creature. But with this Health and Rectitude of Mind, he gains also the due Dimensions, as we may speak, of spiritual Excellency; he now truly becomes little lower than the Angels, who had before made himself almost of an equal Rank with the poor Brutes.

This State of Mind restores and raises all the Faculties of the Soul to their utmost Vigour and Ability. In Sickness there is Weaknes too, and in Health there is Strength and Vigour. And so the Soul has now the happy Advantage of being able and ready for all the Exercises of

Holiness, for the noblest Operations of a reasonable Nature. As it is now in its most perfect State, it is also capable of, and disposed for its most excellent and perfect Operations. In a State of Wickedness the Soul is under the Tyranny of divers Lusts, which exhaust its Vigour, and weaken its Strength ; and bow it down to a low animal Life, and to very mean and contemptible Operations ; too many such as the Wretch himself is even ashamed of at some Flashes of Reason, or of Divine Light into his Mind. And how little acquainted is he with the Divine Life ! how much a Stranger to the Acts, the Sensations, and the Pleasures of this ! How insipid, how void of Pleasure are the Thoughts of God, the chiefest good, to him ! Yea, these are even unpleasant, and he *cares not for the Knowledge of God or of his Ways.* The very Fountain of Joy and Pleasure is unpleasant and distastful to him, and he can see no Loveliness or Beauty in the suprem, and most glorious Beauty and Loveliness. And how irksome too, are all the Duties of Holiness ! Alas, he is not able to perform them with any Relish or Delight ; the Contemplation, Praise and Worship of the great God, and all Instances of Obedience are things he finds himself unfit and not ready for ; his Faculties are indisposed for such things. But when a Man is renewed after the Image of God in Righteousness and true Holiness, and this Image is become perfect and compleat in Glory ; then the Man is perfectly disposed for, and able to perform the noble Actions of the Divine

Divine Life, and then, too, are they highly pleasant to him. It is then his greatest Delight to contemplate, love, praise, and adore the great God : It is no matter of Labour or self-denial, no Violence nor Imposition upon any thing within him. It is never a Grievance or Burden to perform the Dictates of sound and vigorous Nature, which always flow easily and freely from their Principles. Since all the Instances of Duty are agreeable, and natural to us in our right and perfect State, and we are by them oblig'd to nothing but to be happy ; it must be altogether pleasant to the perfect Saints to do such things. And with great Joy and Satisfaction it must be that they find themselves ready, and inclin'd, and able to do so great and excellent things. These are the happy Advantages of this State of Mind considered as it respects the Soul it self.

In the second place, let us consider it as it regards Almighty God, and we shall see much Happiness in it in that respect too.

This State of Mind is a State of perfect *Resignation* and *Submission* to the Will and Disposal of Almighty God. The great God is sovereign Lord, and Owner of all his Creatures, and he does always exercise a Dominion over them, and govern and dispose of them as he pleases. How necessary then is it to the Happiness and Tranquility of a Creature to be entirely resigned to the Disposal of him who will, whether we will or no, dispose of us as he pleases ! And how happy a thing must it be to have no relucting Wishes against what he does with

us! To desire nothing to our selves, but what his holy, and just, and good Will allots to us. And this makes it easie and pleasant to the happy Saints above, that they know they are disposed of by infinite Wisdom and Goodness and Justice. This entire Resignation is the Foundation of a perfect Contentment in the different Degrees and Measures of Glory which shall be distributed in Heaven; for as one Star differs from another Star in Glory, so will it be among the Saints in Heaven: And though it be so, yet shall all be contented, and all perfectly happy.

And this State of Mind disposes to a perfect Subjection and Obedience, as well as to a perfect Resignation: As they do not in the desire of their Wills contradict his Actions and Dealing with them; so they do not in their Actions contradict any Part of his Will concerning their Behaviour towards him: They have no Reluctancy at any of the Commands of God, nor Unwillingness to do what he requires of them. There is a perfect Agreement of Will between God and them: And as he kindly wills nothing concerning them but what is good and happy, so while they obediently will the same things, they must needs be very happy. And what they must do, what they ought to do, they are now most perfectly willing and ready to do, their own Will and Inclination carries them to it. Their Duty then, is in Heaven, their Inclination; their Business is their great Delight and Pleasure; and their very Work is Wages and Reward.

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The Pleasure of this Resignation and Subjection is further heightened in the apparent Fitness and Reasonableness of such a Temper of Mind, which does more perfectly and fully appear than ever it did before. By how much nearer the Saint comes to God, by so much the more is he sensible of his Distance from him: And the better he knows God, the more is he disposed to an humble Reverence and Submission, the more disposed he is to love him, and to obey all the Laws of Love. And when this holy Disposition is perfect, the Saint does joyfully find himself disposed to pay all that is due from him to God, and to acknowledge as he ought, what Excellencies he sees to be in God. He finds himself most perfectly such as he ought to be, and therefore must be at a perfect Agreement, and highly pleased with himself.

But there is yet another thing very happy and pleasant in this perfect Holiness as it regards Almighty God, and that is, that it is a glorious and honourable *Likeness* and *Resemblance* to the excellent and glorious Deity. This Honour the holy Scripture does evidently ascribe to it. Upon this account it was that the Psalmist spoke of the State of Perfection in these Words, *When I awake I shall be satisfied with thy Likeness*. And the Apostle John speaking of this exalted State says of good Men, *Now we are the Sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, (1 Joh. 3. 1.)* God has made us capable, as we are reasonable Creatures, of those we call Moral Excellencies, which also

are infinitely in himself; to bear these then, is to bear his glorious Resemblance and Likeness: Therefore when we are merciful, 'tis said this is to be as our Father in Heaven, who is merciful. The happy Saints in Heaven do each of them advance to the utmost Likeness to him which they are capable of in these matchless Beauties and Glories. These are the Beauties of the Soul, and these render the Saints all glorious within, as the Improvement of their Bodies renders them so in their outward Appearance. And these things being the Glory of the Divine Nature, they must needs be also very honourable to us. Oh what an Honour must this seem to a Man's self, and oh what Esteem must it be with all the Company of Heaven, who see God and dwell in his immediate Presence! Certainly there the greatest Likeness to God must be accounted the greatest and the most honourable Accomplishment. And surely there cannot be a happier thing than to be like the happiest and most perfect Being that is. As the divine Excellencies, being in God in an infinite unmeasurable Fulness, are to him an infinite Bliss, for he is his own Happiness, so this Participation of them in the glorified Saints must needs make them proportionably happy too; and when they have these in as great perfection as they are capable of, they must needs be as happy as 'tis possible for them to be. And what ravishing Transports of Joy and Wonder will it raise in them to view and compare the Glories of God, and those Resemblances of them which are in themselves!

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They will be delighted and pleased to view such Excellencies in God, they will be delighted to see them in themselves, and this Agreement and Likeness between the great God and them will add yet more Delight. It will be very joyful to the Saints to think they are now such as to be perfectly pleasing to God, and as he can take a Complacency and Delight in. And with great Pleasure and Joy they will reflect and consider from how vile and contemptible and wretched a Condition they are advanced to this Glory and Happiness: This will inspire them with eternal Thankfulness and Praise, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the united Authors of this mighty Change.

In the third place, let us briefly consider this Perfection in Holiness, as it regards the other blessed Inhabitants of Heavon. The Saint advanced thither dwells with *an innumerable Company of Angels, and the general Assembly and Church of the first born, the Spirits of just Men made perfect*, as the Apostle speaks (*Heb. 12. 22, 23.*) And by this Perfection of Holiness he is perfectly suited to that bright Society, suited to those with whom he must live for ever, and by consequence is the more acceptable and easie to them, as they also are to him. By this Perfection in Holiness there is a perfect Agreement, and Concord among the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven: They converse together with an entire Confidence in each other, without any Jealousie or Suspicion; without Fraud or Envy; without Malice or ill Design: They are all of them easie and pleasing to one another. Every one

there is very wise and very kind, full of Love to all the rest, and they are full of Love to him. By this Perfection in Holines every one knows and values true Worth and true Love, and seeing these in all the Company, he takes the more Delight in them whom he finds so eminently posseſt of both. Every Saint loves all the rest for the sake of that Love which they all appear to have to God the great Authour of their Being, and the kind Contriver and Accomplisher of their Redemption from Misery, and the Fountain of their Happiness. Because they are all pleasing to him, they are the more pleasing to one another. 'Tis delightful to every one to see all the rest such as he would have them to be. And then with one Mind and one Mouth they joyn, and offer harmonious and agreeing Praifes to God for what he is in himself, and for his Bounty and Goodnes to one another, and to themselves. Oh happy World ! Oh blessed Union ! There Brethren dwell together in the most perfect Unity, and there especially is it experienced how good and pleasant a thing this is: And there, therefore especially, does God, the Authour of Peace and Lover of Concord, Shower down his Blessings upon the whole Society, even Life for evermore.

Thus far is the utmost, that it is convenient for us to go at present in displaying the Riches of the Glory of the Inheritance of the Saints. And what has been said does deserve our deliberate Meditation. Here then let us stop for the present, and look back and seriously meditate on these things, till Opportunity shall be afforded us

us to hear the rest. Oh let us seriously bethink our selves what we now are, how weak and poor, and how miserable by the Effects of Sin upon us. And let us consider too, what we may be! What glorious Bodies we may attain, and how much more glorious Souls! That we, the vile sinful Inhabitants of this low Earth, may become the pure, glorious, and happy Inhabitants of Heaven! The Companions of glorious Angels and fit for the most glorious Presence of God. Let us consider these things till we resolve to prosecute with utmost Diligence this Dignity, and Advancement; and consider them still, that we may put such a Resolution into vigorous Practice and Endeavour. If we would heartily resolve thus, and stedily follow such a Resolution, how wise should we be! How well should we consult our Interest and Happiness: We should consult and pursue the highest, and the everlasting Interest both of Soul and Body. And what incomparable Content and Pleasure might a Man even now take in such a Course, when he might tell himself: In my Endeavours to be pious and virtuous I endeavour but to be happy: I aim at the rectifying of my Nature, at the Health, and Soundness, and Perfection of it! In all my Advances in Grace, and Virtue I advance towards the Glory, and the Happiness of Heaven. In this way I shall grow up at last to a glorious Likeness to the infinite and perfect Deity. This aspiring Course will lift me at length above all that is mean and poor, above all that is little and contemptible, above all that is uncertain and
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Perishing, above all that is vexatious and hurtful, and will bring me to the greatest Attainments of Glory, and Happiness, which my Nature is capable to receive. Thus let us think and do accordingly, and *may God of his infinite Mercy bring us all to this Happiness, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all Honour, Glory and Praise, World without End. Amen.*

THE P R A Y E R.

O Infinite, and Glorious ! Good and Gracious God ! Thou art abundant in Goodness ! O how great is the Goodness which thou hast exercised and shewn to the Children of Men ! And how much greater is that which thou hast prepar'd for them that love thee ! Eye has not seen, neither hath the Ear heard, nor can the Heart of Man conceive the Riches and Glories of those Rewards which thou hast prepared for thy faithful Servants. We adore, we praise thee O God, for making us with such excellent Natures as we have ; and we thank thee for designing us to, and making us capable of so vast Improvements of our Nature as thy Word gives us leave to expect, and invites us to seek. O Lord we are utterly ashamed, we abhor our selves when we consider how much we are fallen below what thou didst make us : That we who bore thine Image in Righteousness and true Holiness, have born the Image of the Devil in Sin and Wickedness : We who were made little lower than the Angels, have ranked our selves among the brute Beasts, and made our selves more vile than they, We must needs condemn our selves,

selves, for that we have neglected the Dignity, and Honour, and Happiness for which thy Goodness design'd us; we have had little or no Concern to advance and improve even our corrupted and depraved Natures. We condemn our selves before thee as foolish and guilty Creatures. We acknowledge our Destruction is of our selves, and only in thee is our Help. We humbly fly to thy Mercy in Jesus Christ: We beseech thee for the sake of that Propitiation which he has made for Sin to pardon all our past Iniquity; to heal our distempered Souls, to enlighten our dark Minds, to rectifie our foolish and perverse Wills, to sanctifie us throughout in Body, Soul, and Spirit, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousnes. Help us through the Spirit to mortifie the Deeds of the Body that we may live: To resist the Temptations of the World and the Devil. Make us industrious to cleanse our selves from all Filthines of Flesh and Spirit, and to perfect Holiness in thy Fear: And do thou, we pray thee, so bless our Endeavours, that we may continually grow in Grace, and may persevere in Holiness to the End of our Lives. Let us no more excessively dote on this vain World, but set our Affections on things above, and with pure Hearts and Minds follow and seek the Enjoyment of thee who art our only Happiness.

Have Mercy we pray thee upon all Mankind, and let them be taught to know and be perswaded to pursue the true Happiness. Bless thy Church with a great Encrease of all Piety and Virtue, and with Abundance of Peace. O that we might see the Time when there shall be no hurting nor destroying in all thy holy Mountain. Lord be merciful we beseech thee to these unhappy Nations in which we live. O let us all see and know the things that belong to our Peace, that our Lusts and Passions, our Humours and private Interests may not so divide and distract us, so distract and weaken us as they do. Make as all joyn together in the Reverence, and Love and Worship of thee, in due Obedience and Subjection to our Governours, and in mutual Endeavours for one anothers welfare. Bless our King we

pray

pray thee with the choicest Blessings, protect his Person, direct his Counsels, prosper his mighty Labour's and Endeavours to the promoting thy Glory and our Peace and Welfare, and the Happiness of much People. Continue our Royal Family as long as the Sun and Moon shall endure ; endue them plenteously with Heavenly Gifts, prosper them with all Happiness, make us an Honour to them, and them a Blessing to us. Do good to all our Relations, Benefactours and Friends, and forgive our Enemies. Accept our humble and hearty Thanks for thine inestimable Love in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ : For the means of Grace we so abundantly enjoy, particularly for those of this Day : Let them always O Lord have such Influence upon us, that they may beget and maintain in us the well-grounded Hope of Glory. We implore thy gracious Protection this Night, and beseech thee to grant us Rest and Refreshment, that we may arise the next Morning with renewed Strength for all our Work and Duty. All we ask in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose most comprehensive Words we sum up our Desires, saying :

OUR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil : For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

T H E

THE
 Final and Compleat
 HAPPINESS
 O F
 GOOD MEN
 RE P R E S E N T E D.

The second Part.

Let us Pray.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our Doings, with thy most gracious Favour, and further us with thy continual Help, that in all our Works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorie thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy Mercy, obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psal. 16. 11.

In thy Presence is Fulness of Joy, at thy Right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.

AS we cannot in this our present Life enjoy our perfect and consummate Felicity, so neither can we now fully know what it is; as the holy Scripture it self tells us. One Apostle says,

says, *We now know but as by a Glass*: Another says, *It does not yet appear what we shall be*. The Mind of Man indeed is not at present suited, nor are our Faculties capable to entertain a full and adequate Conception or Idea of that Blessedness: Therefore the holy Scripture says, *It cannot enter into the Heart of Man what things God hath prepared for them that love him*.

But yet: As very much is, by the Favour of God, reveal'd to us concerning that excellent Happiness in his Word, and we may from thence derive a good Measure of the Knowledge of it, though not a perfect one; so there may be so much said of this from the Intimations of holy Scripture concerning it, as may by the Blessing of God possess us with the Desires of knowing more, and of attaining the perfect Fruition of this Blessedness. Just as the Queen of Sheba, could not have an adequate and full Conception of the Glory of Solomon, by all that she had heard of it, in her own Country: But yet such Representations might be made of it to her, and were so effectually made, that she might be, and was possesst with an earnest Desire to go her self to it, and to know by seeing what it was.

I have therefore begun to represent this Happiness, as well as I can, from the Revelations concerning it in holy Scripture: That I might thereby, if it may please God, possess some worldly and and careless Hearts, with some Sense of its Excellency, and with some warm and vigorous Desires to attain it; which things are the necessary and first Steps towards the Attainment

tainment of it, I have taken notice, that in these Words of the Psalmist we have a very large and comprehensive account of this final and perfect Happiness. And from this account of it I propos'd to insist upon these three general Heads of Discourse concerning it.

1. To represent what they are to be who shall enjoy that Happiness, for even what they are is a great Part of it.

2. To shew what the Saints in Heaven shall enjoy.

3. To observe and illustrate the Import of the general Qualification of that Blessedness mentioned in the Text, which is, that it shall endure for evermore. The first of these Heads I have sufficiently spoken to, and shall now, with the Divine Assistance, proceed to what remains.

The next thing then which I am to do is, to shew what it is that the Saints in Heaven shall enjoy.

It may be said indeed, that I have done this in some measure already, in the two Discourses foregoing this. For it has been said, They shall have a very happy Enjoyment of the glorious Place which they dwell in, and of the Fellowship and Conversation of perfect Saints, and the glorious and kind Angels, and also of their own Excellencies and Improvements of Body and Soul. They shall enjoy these, that is, all these things shall be matter of great Delight and Pleasure to them. But besides all these things, there is so much more of Bliss yet remaining which shall be immediately deriv'd from God himself, and the Enjoyment of him,

that

that all the rest is as nothing in comparison to this. That therefore, which still remains to be spoken to, being our most eminent and considerable Enjoyment, and much the most considerable Part of our final Happiness, I thought I might fitly enough distinguish this from the rest under the Name of what the Saints shall enjoy in Heaven. That (whatever it is) will not only vastly exceed and transcend all other Particulars, but even comprehend them too, or, as we may say, will swallow them up. The other things are as the Streams, and God is the Ocean of Delight and Joy : They are as the Stars, he as the Sun of Glory. His Glory will comprehend, and even conceal theirs as the Light of the Sun does that of the Stars ; and the Delight and Pleasure which all things else afford will be scarce observable with the Enjoyment of him, as Rivers lose all their Distinction when they fall into the Sea of Waters. Thus God *becomes all in all*, as the Scripture speaks. It will be his Glory which the Saints shall chiefly admire, and be pleased with, in every other Glory, and his Goodness and Pleasantness will be chiefly minded, and delighted in, in every other Goodness, when the Saints come to this perfect and consummate Bliss in seeing and enjoying of him.

Let us now see what the holy Scripture tells us concerning this matter : And that seems to represent it to us under this general and comprehensive Notion of it, the Admission into an immediate and special Presence of God. Thus the Psalmist in our Text speaks of it: *In thy*

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Presence is Fulness of Joy, says he to God. So in *Psal. 140. 13.* he says, *The Upright shall dwell in thy Presence.* Now the *Presence* of God (according to the use of the Word in the Hebrew Language) seems to include two things ; the seeing him, and the partaking of some Instances and Expressions of his special and peculiar Favour. So when 'tis said in the Hebrew, in *Prov. 29. 26.* Many seek the Face of the Ruler, we translate it, *Many seek the Ruler's Favour*, because without doubt it means so much. And a learned Father of our Church fitly interprets it thus, Many are ambitious to be known to their Prince, and to obtain his Favour for Honour and Preferment. (Bishop of *Ely* Paraph. in loc.) So when 'tis said *Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord*, (Gen. 4. 16.) The same Father teaches us to understand it thus ; there was a divine Glory made visible (which by the Jews was called the *Shechinah*) which appear'd from the beginning to those of Mankind whom it pleased God to converse with ; the Sight of which *Cain* never after this enjoy'd, but by the Divine Curse was banished from it. And God withdrawing his gracious Presence from *Cain*, he was forsaken by God, and put out of his special Protection ; (Ib. in loc.) so that he had no more granted any Tokens or Expressions of the Divine Favour to him, but rather knew himself an abject, abhorr'd of God as well as hated of all Men. This general Notion then of an Admission into the Presence of God in Heaven we may reckon affords two distinct particulars towards the Happiness there, which are these.

(1.) An immediate Manifestation of the Divine Excellencies and Glories. (2.) Immediate Communications or Expressions of his Goodness, the endearing Caresses of his Love. For doubtless we are not to think, that all the Happiness of Heaven is fitly and adequately represented under the Name of Vision alone, or that it consists in a meer gazing upon, and admiring the Divine Glories. And since even those who call it by that general Name do think themselves oblig'd to explain that Vision as including also the Communications of Divine Love, I think it more fit and proper to speak of these things distinctly and severally. For though these are indeed never separated, yet they may be distinguisht.

In the first place then, we may learn, that the Saints in Heaven shall receive, and enjoy the immediate Manifestations of the Divine Excellency and Glory. These in holy Scripture are represented under the Name of the *Face of God*. Of this, I doubt not, *Job* speaks, *Job* 33. 26, when he says of a true Penitent, *He shall see his Face with Joy*: For those Words may be understood as spoken of what shall be afforded such a Person in the other World. (*Greg. Mag. Expos. Moral in Job l. 24. Cap. 7.*) This also is what the Psalmist means when in hopes of attaining this Happiness at last he says (*Psal. 17. 15.*) *I shall behold thy Face in Righteousness*. And the Apostle *Paul* calls it a seeing God *Face to Face*, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* The Face of God is in Scripture put for any Manifestation of himself to Men: But this which shall be enjoy'd in Heaven

ven we have reason to believe will consist in very peculiar Manifestations of the Glory and Excellency of God. The holy Scripture interprets this Face, by the Glory of God and says, it cannot be seen with mortal Eyes. Therefore when *Moses* requested that he might see this in *Exod. 33. 18.* in those Words, *I beseech thee shew me thy Glory.* We have God's Answer to his Request in *v. 20.* in these Words. *Thou canst not see my Face, for there is no Man shall see me and live.* This is a Manifestation of the Divine Glory which is reserv'd for the perfect Happiness of Heaven. It is the Glory and Excellency of the Divine Nature immediately manifested, and shewn to his Creatures. The blessed Saints in Heaven enjoy this : They have their Understandings elevated, and strengthened by the heavenly Glory, and they steddy fix their Minds upon God, and immediately view him. They *see the Glory of the Lord, and the Excellency of our God,* as the Prophet speaks (*Isa. 35. 2.*) It is a Manifestation of the essential Being or perfect Majesty of God. Hence the Scripture says, that when it is afforded to the blessed Saints in Heaven, they *see him as he is,* *1 Joh. 3. 2.* He is not now vail'd or conceal'd from them by any thing, nor is he represented by any thing but himself. In his Light they see Light. They have such an Apprehension of his Excellencies, and Glories, as we now have of things which we see, and which are presented to an open immediate View. The Beatifick Vision is Intuition or intellectual Sight.

But who can express, who can possibly conceive the Pleasure and Happiness which this will afford ! If it be wonderful and pleasing to observe and contemplate the Divine Perfections as they are now represented in the Word of God ; this must be yet much more pleasing and delightful. They are indeed very bright and charming things which our Faith now receives, by hearing, concerning him ; but if we come to the new *Jerusalem*, and there see the King of Glory immediately manifested in his incomprehensible Brightness and Glory, how much more joyful and pleasant may we easily imagine this must needs be. We know by ordinary experience, that what the Eye sees does affect us much more, whether it be with Pleasure or Vexation, than what we only hear of by the Ear. It is somewhat more to see God in his wonderful and glorious Works than only to know him by what we hear : And yet, after that the Saints have considered and admired the glorious Works of God which appear in this World, and have viewed and considered with great Wonder and Delight, the much more glorious Works which will appear in that far more glorious World above, it will still this immediate Manifestation of the divine Nature, wherein all those Excellencies center and dwell which shew themselves in those Works, be incomparably more delightful and pleasant to the Saints.

This Manifestation of the divine Nature and Attributes, will give the Saint a ravishing Apprehension of further Effects yet possible to be produced. And will occasion the active Mind

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to entertain it self with the Treasures of Divine Wisdom, Power, and Goodness not yet drawn forth into Exercise ; with the unexhaustible, unbounded Wealth of the Deity ! It will awaken him to conceive innumerable Worlds yet possible, and to suppose things incomparably more excellent and glorious than any that are yet produced. This will very brightly demonstrate that the divine Perfections are infinite, and extend themselves far beyond the Reach of utmost and most enlarged Thought, as well as beyond all the past and actual Exercise of themselves. So will the happy Saints be pleased to find that these Perfections have no Bounds nor Limits. And they have a most sublime and ravishing Joy to imagine Worlds of unknown Beauties and Glories in the Deity : To think that if their Capacity were infinitely larger than it is, yet could the infinitely glorious Object enlighten it all, and fill it with Light and Glory : To think that the most excellent and capable Creatures, though they know most of God, yet cannot know all, but indeed do fall infinitely short of him, nor can he be known fully, and perfectly by any one but himself. And with vast Pleasure do they multiply in their Thoughts all that they know of the glorious Deity, they suppose endless Additions to it, and after all the Additions to it in their Thoughts, they know he infinitely surpasses all. And with this the Mind in Heaven is delighted and pleased, the infinite Glories of the Deity do not amaze nor discourage it : The Saint can entertain himself still with the unmeasurable Object,

and with vast unwearied delight plunges still his admiring Thoughts into an Abyss of Glory.

By this Manifestation of the divine Excellencies and Glories in themselves, the Saints will better apprehend them in the Marks and Characters which they have left of themselves upon their wonderful Effects, they will much the better know them again wherever they meet them. And so this bright Light will illuminate all that was dark in the Works of God before : And will inable the happy Saints with Wonder and Joy, to call to mind even those very Operations of God which were some time grievous to them, because they did not understand them. They now see and praise that infinite Goodness, and admirable Wisdom, and Almighty Power which have exercised themselves in the Creation and Government of the World : And these evidently appear to them upon many things where they could not see them before : They see the Glory of these shining particularly in the Dealings of God with Mankind, and in all those Dispensations by which they themselves have been brought to everlasting Happiness. Thus will the Memory of past things refresh and please them, as in them they will now very plainly see the charming Impresses and Characters of the divine Perfections.

This Manifestation of the great God gives at once a very large and comprehensive Knowledge of him. The Saints do not now gather this by a tedious and laborious Train of Reasoning and Discourse which gains Knowledge, as we may say, but by Sparkles, and gives, too commonly, but very partial and imperfect Notions of the Deity. This makes him intirely known, as far as they are capable, and that by one, easie, perpetual View, by full Beams of divine Glory always resting upon the Mind : And thus must he needs be more perfectly known in Heaven than ever he was before, and therefore with more Pleasure too. The Saints there know more of God than ever they could before, and they know it all more evidently and certainly than ever. And as Light is pleasant to the Eye, so

is Knowledge to the Mind, and this is always so much the more pleasant as it is more important, full, and clear: This Manifeitation, then, must give the happy Saints the highest Pleasure as it gives them the clearest and the fullest Knowledge of him who is the most excellent and perfect Being, and in whom every thing that can be known is admirable, glorious and pleasing.

This Manifestation of the divine Glories fills the Mind with Light and Glory. As the perfect Sanctification of Heaven leaves no Spot of Corruption, so this leaves no Shadows of Ignorance or Darkness: All the enlarged Capacity is filled with the Light of a clear and distinct Knowledge: And of the happy Soul it may now be said that it self also is Light, and in it is no Darkness at all; the Soul it self is even transformed into Light and Glory: Now is that most perfectly fulfill'd which the Apostle speaks (2 Cor. 3. 18.) laying, *We all as with open Face beholding the Glory of the Lord are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory.* And as the Light of this Knowledge thus fills and transforms the Mind, it must be most inwardly and intirely possest and sensible of unspeakable Joy and Pleasure too.

2. To these immediate Manifestations of the divine Excellency and Glory are joyn'd in Heaven, the immediate Expressions and Communications of his Goodnes and Love. And this Addition is what does properly add Fruition to Vision, and gives the Saints an intire and a blissful Enjoyment of God. It is easie to conceive there would be very little Pleasure in having such bright and glorious Manifestations of the divine Excellency and Greatnes made to them without suitable Expressions, and Evidences of Goodness and Love. Yea, we may justly suppose they would render him even terrible to poor mean Creatures, and overwhelm them with Astonishment, rather than give them Delight and Pleasure. But the great Happines of Heaven is, that all those Excellencies and Glories which shall be manifested shall appear as kind as great. They shall mightily adorn his Love, and his Love shall sweeten them: His Love makes them appear good and kind, and they make his Love appear great and glorious.

Such Communications and Expressions of divine Love the holy Scripture gives us leave to expect, will be afforded in Heaven. Our Text intimates this in saying, that the Presence which is manifested there will afford *Fullness of Joy, and Pleasures for evermore.* It must be a favourable Presence which shall do this, and so be attended with Exercises and Expressions of divine Love. The Psalmist must be reckoned to mean these especially when he says, *Oh how great is the Goodness which thou hast prepar'd for them that fear thee!* Psal. 31. 19. In the same admiring manner he speaks of them again in Psal. 36.7. where he says, *How excellent is thy loving Kindness O God!* And to shew that he had his Thoughts chiefly upon these Communications of divine Love, he tells, in Ver. 8,9. where the loving Kindness which he celebrates is chiefly to be enjoy'd, and says, *They, that is those good Men who would worship and put their Trust in him, shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of thy House, even of thy holy Temple, and thou shalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleasures, for with thee is the Fountain of Life:* By which Expressions we may justly believe that he chiefly means Heaven, and that Presence of God which will be afforded there. The immediate Caresses and Expressions of divine Love may be expected by holy Souls, as appears by that Wish which Solomon puts into the Mouth of the Spouse, Cant. 1. 4. *Let him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth, thy Love is better than Wine.* But surely there are to be enjoy'd in Heaven if any where, and if any where, then especially, and in the sweetest manner there.

There indeed will he most abundantly and immediately make the Saints sensible of his Love to them. There they shall to the greatest Purpose know that *God is Love.* They shall perceive and partake of his Goodness, not only in his Gifts or Works, but even in himself. As his Glory shall be represented to them by its own Light, so his Love shall be made sensible by its own immediate Sweetness and Goodness. They shall always see him regarding them, as we may say, with a kind and gracious Aspect. He will never turn away his Face from them,

them, nor ever make it uneasie or terrible by Frowns and Displeasure. He will make his Love apparent and sensible by the most charming Endearments and Consolations; and display it in all its Magnificence and Glory: But how great Joy, how unconceivable Pleasure must it needs create in the happy Saints, to enjoy the Love of a God! To have Infinite Perfections exercised in Expressions of Kindness and Love to them!

These Communications and Expressions of the divine Love do necessarily kindle a mighty Flame of Love in the Saints to him. It is not possible that they can dwell and converse with so much Love without being themselves even transformed into Love. As his Glory communicates and fills them with Glory, so his Love communicates and fills them with Love. They now most perfectly love him with all their Soul, and with all their Strength; with all the Strength of raised and improved Faculties of Mind and Soul. And Love and Pleasure are things that always go together; all the Exercises of Love are highly pleasing. Love is so pleasant a thing it can sweeten those that are bitter, it can sweeten Labour and Pain, and make even the long Delays of lingring Expectation tolerable. But more must it be pleasant to the happy Saints in Heaven, where they are possest of him they supremely love, and do enjoy from his Love all that their own can desire.

This mutual Love produces a sort of Union between God and the Saints in Heaven; a very intimate, and without doubt, a very sensible Union, of which we may believe St. John speaks when he says, *He that dwells in Love dwells in God, and God in him,* 1 Job.4.16. And surely this cannot chuse but be an unspeakable Happiness. To be united to God, and to dwell in him is to be united to infinite Glory and Love. And they that could dwell in the Sun we may be sure would not want Light, nor they that dwell in the Sea Water: Much rather must they who dwell in God and are united to him, be filled with Glory and Love and Happiness. As the Understanding of the Saints immediately views and apprehends the Glory of God, so their Will is intimately and immediately

diately joyn'd to his Goodness by mutual Love ; and it perceives the chiefeſt Good, God himſelf, embracing and carefeſſing the Saint with ineffable Love. In Love, God communicates even himſelf to them, and they have in a ſort a Possefſion of him. All the happy Company of the Saints can ſay, this great, this glorious God is our God for ever and ever ! And each happy Saint can there with moſt Reaſon and moſt Pleaſure ſay of him, *My beloved is mine and I am his* : Since he is an infinite Good, every one may ſay he is mine, though they be an innumerable Company. All the Riches, all the Glories of the divine Nature are by his condefcending Love their Possefſion, and ſhall be their Felicity for ever. God himſelf is their Portion, and he ſurely muſt be an exceeding great Reward. God is the universal Good ; he contains in himſelf the Perfection and Goodneſs of all other things, and that in the highest Eminency. And he affords to the Saints, and they enjoy in him, the Love of all other the kindeſt Relations, and the Goodneſs of all other the beſt things, and muſh more than all this. The Riches of ten thouſand Worlds were a diſmal Poverty to what they poſſeſs and enjoy. In mutual Love, he freely communicates himſelf to them, with overſloving Blifſ ; they wholly apply themſelves to praife and honour him.

For this mutual Love and Union is attended with ſuitable Actions between them, and with very intimate and friendly Communion and Converſe. As Friends embrace with mutual Endearments, and with great Pleaſure and Delight conveſe together, ſo it is between God and the happy Saints in Heaven. God delights in them and they in him ; and in the kindeſt ways they expreſſ their mutual Satisfaction and Delight in each other. The Communications of his Love and Goodneſs excite and inable them for very high and tranſporting Exprefſions of their Love to him : And the more he gives to them, the more they render and repay to him : The more he loves, the more they return of Love. He is alwaſs delighting over them, to do them good, and make them happy ; and they are alwaſs pleated to make the beſt Returns of Love and thankful Praifes to him. The whole

whole Company of Heaven laud and magnifie him: They joyn together, and they affit one another to love and praise him, for what he is in himself, and for his Goodness to them.

These Communications of the divine Goodness must needs give the happy Saints in Heaven a perfect Contentment and full Satisfaction; and they shall feel what the Psalmist expresses, *a Fullness of Joy*. They are now posseft of the chiefest, the univerſal Good, beyond whom there is nothing more that they can desire, and they have the fulleſt and most perfect Possession and Enjoyment of him which they can desire. They have gained now, all that they have to wish for, and are now perfectly at rest: They are in the Center of Joy and Blisſ. Oh how great a Felicity is this! May not our wretched craving Minds, which are still thirsting after Happines whatever it is that we can enjoy of this World, and still unsatisfied while we remain here, easily make us ſensible of the Pleasure and Felicity of Satisfaction and Rest? The Saints posſeſt of God and heavenly Blisſ are no longer bound to labour and toil, no longer vexed with uneasie Cares, and uncertain Solicitudes, that they may provide for themselves what they want or desire. They easily and continually derive from the infinite Fountain of Goodnesſ a full Satisfaction to all their Desires: They derive from his everflowing Fulnesſ without asking or any patient waiting for his Communications. He gives continually and they receive: They feaſt continually upon the Celestial Entertainments of his Love, and with all the Pleasure but without the Pain of Hunger and Thirſt: They always reliſh with incomparabie Pleasure what they receive, and always are filled with Blisſ and Joy.

But this brings me to the third and laſt Head of Discouſe which I am to inſtit upon: And that is, to illustrate a little the Import of that general Qualification of this Bleſſednesſ, mentioned in the Text, That it ſhall continue for evermore. *In thy Preſence is Fulnesſ of Joy*, ſays the Psalmist, *at thy right hand are Pleaſures for evermore*. This the holy Scripture frequently affiures us of. That bleſſed State above is the *enduring City*. What will be there en-joy'd

joy'd is the Treasure which neither *Moth* nor *Rust* can corrupt, *Thieves* break through and *steal*: It is a Felicity made up of things which will neither fail of themselves, and shall never be taken from us. It is an *Inheritance* that shall never fade away. And *Life eternal*, or everlasting. Oh happy and most comfortable *Assurance*! It is indeed necessary to the Perfection of this *Happiness* that it should be everlasting: And it is this which makes it compleat and absolute *Bliss*, that it shall endure for ever. The greater our *Happiness* were there, the greater would our *Trouble* be if we must fear or expect that it would have a *Period*. And it would embitter the *Pleasures* even of *Heaven* it self to know that they should come to an end, though that *End* were at never so great a *Distance*. But this is not the *State* of the heavenly *bliss*: That shall be everlasting. And this includes these three very comfortable *Particulars* which are worth our *Meditation*.

1. The *Happiness* of *Heaven* shall never be, for the shortest Space, interrupted. There shall no *Sin* enter there to cloud the *Face* of *God*, or hinder the *Communications* of his *Love*; the one shall perpetually shine, and make a *Day* without any *Night*, the other like an eternal *River* of *Delights* and *Pleasures* shall continually flow. The *Faculties* shall continue for ever, and the *Objects* of *Happiness* and the *Union* between them shall endure for ever, without the least *Intermission*. The *Spiritual Body*, and *immortal Soul* shall be able to act with unwearied *Vigor*, and shall never cease to feel their tasteful *Pleasures*. There will be no *Spaces* wherein they shall do nothing or be doing somewhat else; nothing but *blissful* and *pleasant Action* shall spend their *Eternity*. Oh how desirable is this *State*, where they shall have nothing to do but to be happy! And which is not mingled with *Labour* and *Enioyment*, with *Toil* or *Pain* and *Pleasure*, but is only an uninterrupted, unintermittid *Pleasure* and *Enjoyment*.

2. The *Happiness* of *Heaven* shall never suffer any *Diminution* or *Decay*. These are not fading or *transitory Pleasures* which *Heaven* affords the *Saints*, but *lasting* and *abiding ones*. That which is *eternal* can never decay: For, to decay is to draw nearer to an *End*, but that which shall

shall never end can never approach nearer to an End. The divine Glory Manifested shall never fade, nor shall the Fountain of Love, then fully opened, ever be exhausted or run low. The Good enjoy'd there is an unchangeable, as well as an infinite Good: And the happy Saints themselves in the mighty Improvement of their Faculties are made capable to enjoy perpetually the highest Pleasures. All the Capacities indeed which we have now are so weak that they cannot long bear even a high Pleasure: But the sweeter, and the more delicious it is, the sooner are we satiated, and cloy'd with it; then it grows flat and insipid, and it becomes a Drudgery and Burden to continue in it; and we are forced to lay it aside awhile that we may relish it again. But it is not thus with the Celestial Pleasures. The improved Faculties of the Saints shall there enjoy the rich Delights without Weariness, there they are rather improved than tired by Exercise and Motion. They are capable of perpetual Transports and Extravagies of Joy and delight. They shall always then be happy, and always enjoy the highest Happiness they can desire: They shall always be perfectly and compleatly happy.

3. The Happiness of Heaven shall continue without End. The Saints shall have there an endless perfect Enjoyment of the eternal Good. No Number of Ages shall ever put an End to an eternal Life. This Felicity will endure after so many thousands or Millions of Years as there are Stars in the Heavens, and Drops of Water have fallen in Rain since the Creation, and as there are Sands upon the Sea-shore. And after all this it will continue as much longer; yea, as long as all this repeated a great many times! Oh vast Eternity! All the Words which we can speak besides can never exhaust the rich Sence and Meaning, or measure the Duration of Eternity! To say the most that can be said towards this in one amazing Expression, we may say: The Happiness of the Saints in Heaven shall continue as long as the eternal, unchangeable God himself shall endure! O joyful Thought! O vast Expectation! An Eternity of Bliss! What Pleasure does it possess us with now to think of it! And how much more

Pleasure

Pleasure will it be to enjoy this! It will add yet more Delight to every other rich Delight in Heaven, and make every other Pleasure there the more pleasant. This brings the Joy and Sweetness of an Eternity of Bliss into every Pleasure they enjoy.

Thus I have briefly represented the final Happiness of Mankind according to what the holy Scripture teaches us of it. And now, what remains for us to do, who are still the wretched Inhabitants of Time, and this miserable World? But to think often of the great and glorious, the delightful and eternal Happiness which waits to receive us hereafter: Which is offer'd to us now, and which we may secure to our selves, or which we may forfeit, and lose for ever. It becomes us certainly to study in what way we may come thither, and to make our selves diligent and stedfast in that way by considering this incomparable Happiness. In the Ways of Piety and Virtue which lead to Life everlasting, we ought to be stedfast and unmovable: No present Wants or Afflictions, no Threatnings or Persecutions, no Labours which are but for a moment should ever be able to divert us from the way to eternal Bliss and Rest. And on the other hand, no present Profits or Honours, no worldly Pleasures or Allurements which are things but for a Season, should be able to allure us from the Ways of Piety and Virtue; which lead to the truest Riches, the highest Dignities and Honours, and to the sweetest and most abiding Pleasures. Oh let us be very careful and earnestly endeavour so to run this Race as that we may obtain the eternal Crown and Reward: So to fight the good Fight of Faith as that we may finish our Course with Joy: So to govern our selves always here, as that we may grow up to a due Fitness for the holy and spiritual Happiness of Heaven, and for that pure Place where no unclean thing can come: And so we may be at last admitted to the Presence of God where is Fulness of Joy, and to his Right Hand where are Pleasures for evermore. Through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, Glory, and Praise World without End. Amen.

THE

The PRAYER.

OH most glorious, bounteous and merciful God. Thou delightest in doing good, and waitest to be gracious. We cannot chuse but admire the Riches, the Condescensions, and the Patience of thy Goodnes and Love towards the Children of Men. Thou loadest us with the Blessings of this Life, who commonly abuse them in the Service of divers Lusts, and do affront and injure thee as far as we can. And especially are we moved to admire thee, and praise thy glorious Goodnes when we consider the great and glorious Happiness, which thou hast design'd us for and made us capable of: And which, though we have render'd our selves utterly unfit for and unworthy of it, yet thou kindly invitest us to seek it, thou art ready to help us obtain it. We who are unworthy to enjoy the Comfort of thy meanest Creatures dost thou invite to thy glorous and unconceivable Felicity of enjoying thy self: Who art an infinite, eternal Good, in whom all Fulnes dwells, who wilt enlarge and fill the Capacities of those that enjoy thee and abundantly satisfie them with the Joys and Pleasures of thy Presence for ever. Lord what Rewards hast thou prepared for them that will love and serve thee! How great is thy Goodnes which will recompence the short, transitory Labours and Sufferings of this Life in thy Service with an Eternity of Rest and Peace and Happiness. We are ashamed to think O Lord, that thy rich and bounteous Rewards have had so little Influence upon us, that we have lived careless and forgetful of them. O pardon our Folly and make us wiser for the future. Let us be made deeply sensible that our true Happiness lies only in the Enjoyment of thee, that thou art our chief Good, thou alone canst make us perfectly and eternally happy. Convince us effectually of the Emptines and Vanity of this World, that it is cursed by reason of Sin, and was never intended for our chiefest Happiness. And let our Hearts and Affections be therefore raised from these low things, and set upon the things above. Make us to love most, and desire above all things the glorious Happiness which thou hast promised to those that love and serve thee. And let thy great Mercy O God, teach us thy Statutes, lead us in the Way of thy Commandments, make us to love and

and chuse that which thou hast commanded, to be diligent and stedfast here in all the Practice of Piety and Virtue which thou requirest. Pardon we beseech thee all our past Iniquity to our unfeigned Repentance of it ; for we do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for all our Misdoings, we hate our selves for our unreasonable Enmity to thee, and are angry with our selves for displeasing thee. Turn us from every evil way, and shew thy self reconciled to us, and grant us the comfortable Hopes of the future Blessedness now to encourage us in our Duty, that we may persevere in it to the End of our Lives. Guide thou us we pray thee by thy Counsel till thou hast brought us to thy Glory.

Have mercy we beseech thee upon all Mankind. Let thy Way be known upon Earth, thy saving Health among all Nations. Let thy glorious Gospel run and be glorified, give it every where such Influence and Power, that all those who profess to believe it may forsake all that is evil, and walk as Children of the Light, and as having their Conversation in Heaven. We pray thee bless these Nations in which we live : Give us Peace and Plenty of all good things, especially establish Truth, and promote all true Piety and Virtue, that we may duly honour and glorifie thee, and may be mutually comfortable to one another. We pray thee bless abundantly our most gracious King, bless him in his Person, and in his Government, with long Health of Body, great Encrease of all Virtues, with great Success in his Affairs, and with much Honour and Obedience from his People. We pray thee bless, prosper, and continue our Royal Family. Let it always afford these Nations such a Person as will rule over us in thy Fear, as will love and practise thy true Religion, establish'd among us, and study to preserve the People in Wealth, Peace, and Godliness. Bless all our Relations and Friends with all temporal and spiritual Mercies in this Life, and with the eternal Favours of Heaven in the next. We give thee hearty Thanks O Lord, for all thy gracious Revelations to us, of thy self, and of thy Will and Law, and of our true Happiness. Let them by thy blessing make us wise to our Salvation by Faith in Jesus Christ. We humbly commit our selves to thy gracious Protection this Night, and for all the Remainder of our Days, imploring thy merciful Regard to us for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Mediator and Advocate, for whom we bless thee, and in whose Words we sum up and conclude our Requests, saying, *Our Father, &c.*

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